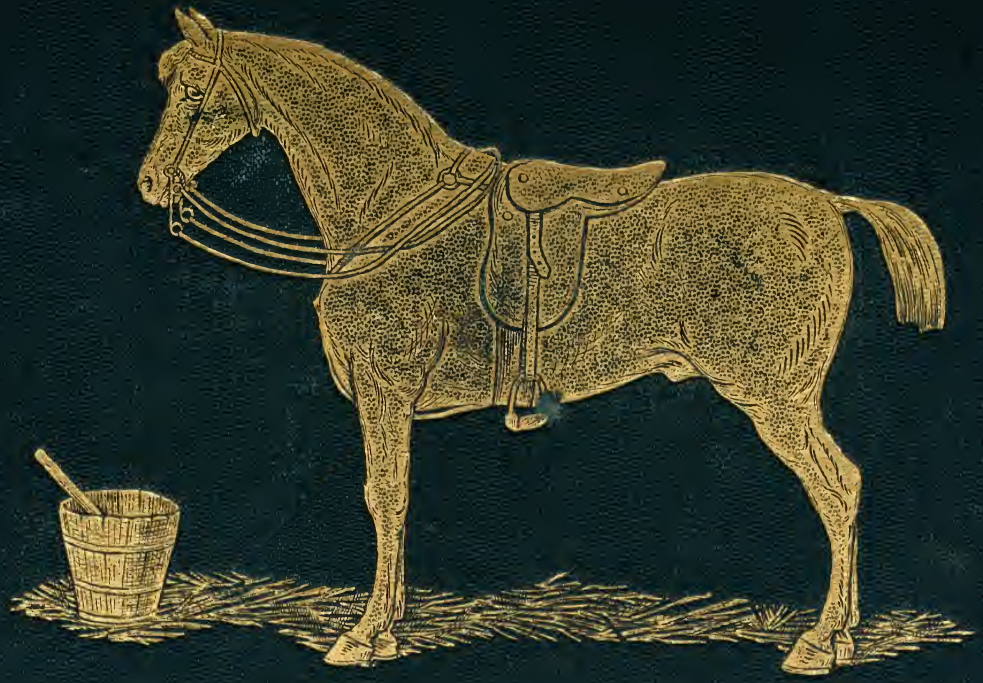


JOHN A. SEAVERNS

LONDON : PRINTED BY
SPOTTISWOODE AND CO., NEW-STREET SQUARE
AND PARLIAMENT STREET

GLENCOE.

A Chestnut Thoroughbred Horse, by Sultan—Trampoline. Bred by the Duke of Grafton.
Won the Two Thousand Guineas and Goodwood Cup.

HORSES AND RIDING

BY

GEORGE NEVILE, Esq. M.A.

WITH NUMEROUS ILLUSTRATIONS BY THE AUTHOR

SECOND EDITION

LONDON
LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.
1877

PREFACE.

A GENUINE fondness for horses, combined with a recollection of the falls I have had, the good runs I have lost, and the disappointments I have met with, from want of the knowledge contained in its pages, has induced me to write this book.

Every year a fresh batch of riders make their first appearance in the field, eager to learn but unwilling to ask, and unable to sift the good advice they sometimes receive from the useless information often given. It is for these that I have principally written.

I have drawn for them the sort of horse they should buy when they can meet with one, standing as a horse ought to stand to be mounted, that is, with his weight resting equally on all his legs, and with nobody holding his head.

I have put on his back a saddle which will fit him, and on which a man can ride easily and

comfortably, with stirrups the right shape and bridle reins the right length.

As a frontispiece I have given my readers the portrait of Glencoe, a horse I consider the best-shaped I ever saw, or ever saw a picture of.

I have shown him what to choose and what to avoid; what unsoundnesses to beware of, and what faults in riding to keep clear of; and, if he will take the trouble to master its contents, I have put in his possession a work which will enable him to go without trepidation into a dealer's yard, to buy a horse that he will like, and to ride him with satisfaction.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER IV.

CHOOSING.

CHAPTER V.

PRICE.

CHAPTER VI.

ABILITY TO CARRY WEIGHT.

CHAPTER VII.

TEMPER.

CHAPTER VIII.

MOUTH.

CHAPTER IX.

RIDING ON THE ROAD.

CHAPTER X.

SHOEING.

CHAPTER XI.

FEEDING.

CHAPTER XII.

BRIDLING.

CHAPTER XIII.

SADDLING.

CHAPTER XIV.

VALUE.

CHAPTER XV.

COLOUR.

CHAPTER XVI.

DIFFERENT BREEDS.

CHAPTER XVII.

RIDING ACROSS COUNTRY.

CHAPTER XVIII.

LEAPING.

CHAPTER XIX.

HUNTERS.

CHAPTER XX.

STABLES.

CHAPTER XXI.

STABLE UTENSILS, ETC.

CHAPTER XXII.

COMMON UNSOUNDNESSES.

CHAPTER XXIII.

BREEDING.

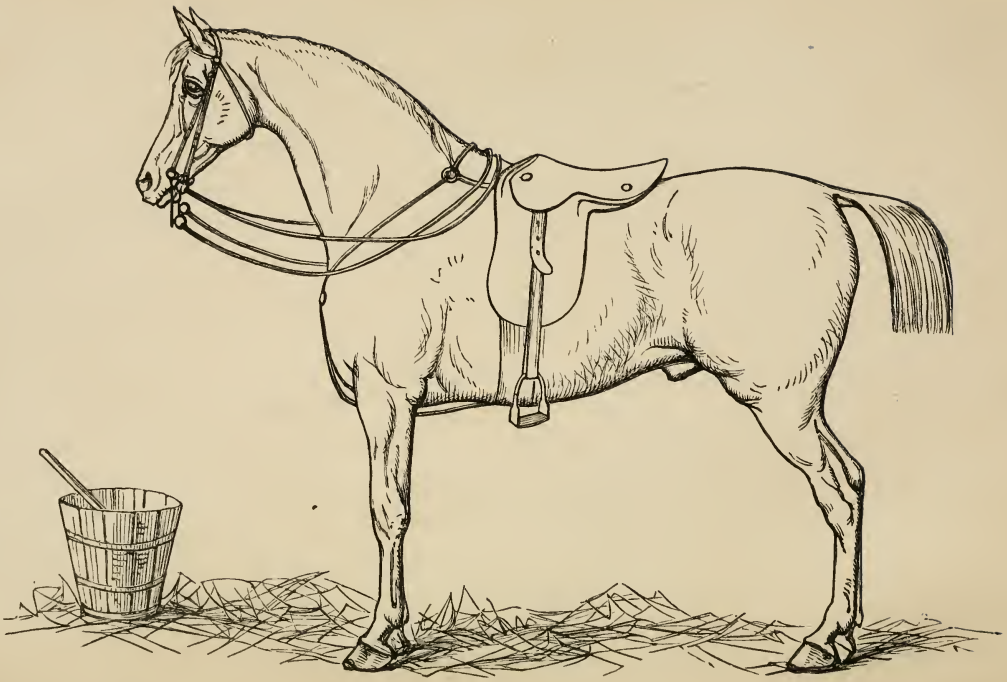
CHAPTER XXIV.

BREAKING AND TRAINING.

CHAPTER XXV.

BETTING.

ILLUSTRATIONS.



THE RIGHT SORT OF HORSE TO BUY

HORSES AND RIDING.

INTRODUCTION.

Macaulay, somewhere in his History of England, in describing the social position allotted to officers of the army of that day, writes as follows:—'There were gentlemen in those days, and there were officers in those days, but the gentlemen were not officers and the officers were not gentlemen.' I think something of the same sort, in reference to books about horses and riding, may with a certain amount of truth be said at the present time, viz. that there are good horsemen and there are good authors, but as a rule the horsemen are not authors, and the authors are not horsemen.

Anyone who does not know anything about riding, and who wishes to get to know something about it, or who knows a little about it and wishes to learn more, will find it difficult to obtain a book

that will impart to him any practical information on the subject, which is of use to him; while, if he abandons the idea of learning from books and tries to get any of his acquaintance to teach him, he will find that although plenty of men can ride well themselves they have not the faculty of imparting to anyone else the knowledge they possess, and that many things they can do without any apparent effort and with the greatest ease are perfectly impracticable to a novice.

Most children and probably many grown-up people receive their first lessons from grooms, and as a rule grooms have not the same practice in riding as their employers.

A very common piece of advice to a beginner, before trying to leap, is an injunction to 'sit tight, and keep hold of his head,' which is about on a par with the advice generally given to beginners with a gun, viz. to 'aim straight.'

Both these instructions are equally useless, and if acted upon would almost invariably lead to failure. For if you aimed straight at say a partridge flying across you, you would probably kill one that was flying a yard behind the one you aimed at; and if you rode over a fence without altering your position and without leaving go of the horse's bridle to a certain extent, he would most likely pull you over his head by extending his neck on landing. I shall endeavour in the following work to give my readers

some sort of idea how to proceed in choosing and riding a horse; or, if they already know how to do that, in making a horse more perfect and capable of carrying them more pleasantly.

CHAPTER I.

BUYING OR CHOOSING.

BEFORE riding a horse it is necessary to obtain one, and I will therefore devote the first chapter to some observations and hints on the choice of a horse.

The various distinctions between horses may be enumerated as distinctions in size, shape, colour, action, quality or beauty, and breeding.

The different purposes for which horses are generally wanted are, racing on the racecourse—racing across country, or steeplechasing—hunting—hacking or riding on the road—driving in single or double harness, and working on a farm.

Or, to put it shortly, a horse is either a racehorse, hunter, hack, harness horse, or a cart horse.

The first thing with reference to a horse's breeding which I would point out is, that, taking the different breeds in the order I have enumerated, each horse, if well-shaped and strong, is qualified to perform every duty performed by one of a lower breed.

Thus, while a cart horse is only fit for agricultural work, a racehorse or thoroughbred may be used either as a steeplechaser, hunter, or hack, and may be driven in harness, or worked on a farm.

Similarly a horse bred exclusively for hunting will make a good hack or carriage horse, but would fail to be of much use as a racehorse; hence we arrive at the rule, that the better bred a horse is (other qualities being equal), the more uses he can be put to.

If we take any particular horse of a well-bred class we shall find that his value depends a good deal on three things: his size, the amount of symmetry he possesses, that is his shape, and his temper or disposition. There are other qualities—for instance, beauty, action, and strength—but these are more or less included in the first three.

Thus, action depends on a horse's shape and disposition combined. Beauty depends a good deal on symmetry, combined with colour; and strength is produced by a combination of size and symmetry. I should here say that by the word size it must not be understood that the height of a horse only is meant: that is only one element of size—the size of a horse, in the fullest sense, means a combination of his length, height, and thickness; that is, his length from his head to his tail, his height from his shoulder-point to the ground, and the width and depth of his body. It is also evident that, whatever purpose a

horse is required for, he is better for possessing symmetry and action, and a good temper or disposition.

The chief point, therefore, which anyone has to settle in their own mind in choosing a horse is, what amount of breeding, and what amount of size, they wish to have in the animal they select. Colour is by some supposed to be a question simply of fashion and of fancy, but some colours are almost always preferred to others; and, as far as can be judged, particular qualities are generally to be found allied with particular colours. As regards what is generally called a horse's make and shape, it will be found that, as a horse being well-shaped means being symmetrical, and as symmetrical means a certain proportion or harmony between the component parts, that therefore there is a certain resemblance or family likeness between well-shaped horses, of whatever size or breed they may be.

We will, therefore, lay down as a rule that when you want to buy a horse you ought to consider what size you want him to be, and what amount of breeding you wish him to have, and then try and obtain as much of all the other good qualities as you can.

CHAPTER II.

SHAPE.

Now first as regards the shape of a horse. This must be judged of by looking at him from several points of view; and in order to judge of his general outline you ought to be far enough from him to take in the whole of him at once, without your eyes resting on one part of him more than another. For this reason it is not a good plan to look at a horse in a stable to get an idea of his shape, for you are too near him to see the proportion between one part and another.

When the horse is brought out most people, I believe, stand much too near him to be able to judge correctly, and are often in consequence disappointed in their purchase when they have got him home.

For instance, if a man examines a horse in a stable only, he may satisfy himself that the horse has a good neck and shoulders, and also good hind quarters, and yet the horse's fore quarters may be totally out of proportion to his hind quarters, and he

may really look as if he was made of two halves of two different-sized animals joined together.

A close inspection is very valuable to see and judge whether a horse has any local defects, but a more distant view should first be obtained.

For this reason I should advise anyone to first look at a horse from a distance of forty or fifty yards; and then, if the horse's looks please him, proceed to a closer inspection.

The first view is generally taken with the horse's broadside to you. With reference to this view, a horse must either be a long, low horse, a tall, short horse, or a square horse. Many people who could tell you directly if a horse was a long, low horse or not are still quite unable to point out what a long, low horse means. The following is the explanation: If you take a side-view of a horse and drop a line from the top of his shoulder or withers to the ground, then draw another line from the front of his breast to the furthest part of his hind quarters, and then compare the two measurements, if the first measurement is the longest he is a tall, short horse; that is, he is higher than he is long; if the second measure is the longest, he is a long, low horse; if both measurements are alike, he is a square horse.

Of these three shapes it is the fashion to consider the long, low one as the best; but for general purposes—that is, hacking on the road, hunting, and riding over all sorts of fences and ground—I should

prefer a horse as nearly square as possible. A long, low horse will jump brooks and drains and other wide jumps the best, and a short, tall one will jump post and rails and stone walls.

A long, low one will gallop best over flat deep ground, but a shorter horse will get up and down hill and over ridge and furrow better.

A square horse, being between the other two, will be the best at all-round work; that is, he will jump brooks and gallop through dirt better than a tall, short horse, and will go up and down hill better than a long, low one.

Looking at a horse sideways his neck should form a convex segment of a circle, his back a concave segment, and his loins and thighs a convex segment again, thus:—

Fig. 1.

It should be noted here that it is a very common mistake for inexperienced persons, in estimating a horse's shape, to think that he will alter in shape according as he alters in condition. This is a fruitful source of disappointment; for although a horse develops considerably with age and condition, still

the construction of his shape will always remain to a great extent the same.

Thus, take the case of a lean horse with a concave neck (what is commonly called a ewe neck). Many people might think that when the horse got fat his neck would be the right shape; whereas you can no more fatten a ewe-necked horse into a horse with a good neck than you could by feeding convert a person with a turn-up nose into one with a hooked nose.

The chief thing that a side-view of a horse is adapted to show is the proportion between his height and length, the shape of his neck and head, and the size of the horse's barrel, which is commonly divided into his girth—that is, where the saddle-girths come—and his back ribs, or the part immediately under the back of the saddle. It is also the place from which to judge of the horse's hocks, to see if he has got curbs, and if his fore legs are straight or crooked; but of that I shall treat in a future chapter devoted to unsoundnesses.

As regards the shape of a horse's body or barrel, a good depth in the girth is a good thing; but if a horse is wide in his chest he is generally not so deep in his girth as he would be if he were narrower; and a wide-chested horse is stronger than a narrow one, although he may not look so deep in the girth. It is very desirable that a horse's back ribs should be large; that is, that his body should look as big near

the hind legs as it does near the fore legs. A horse which looks light in the stomach when he is fat in his limbs will not be so strong or enduring as a horse which looks thick in the middle at all times.

A side-view is also the proper place to judge of a horse's shoulder; but, as that is one of the most difficult and most important points to settle about in a horse, I shall speak of it separately.

The second view to be taken of a horse is to stand in front of him. From this point you can observe the width of a horse's chest and shoulders, and whether his toes are turned out or in. As regards the latter point, I need not say that a horse's feet should be straight; but although turning their toes out or in are both faults, still there is a very wide difference between them.

Horses that turn their toes out may be ridden with pleasure, and are often good-tempered and have good shoulders, whereas horses that turn their toes in are often morose in their tempers and clumsy in their action. I should also say that it is better for a horse to turn both toes out than to turn one toe out; while, on the other hand, it is worse for a horse to turn both toes in than to turn one in.

The front view is also the proper place to detect spavins in a horse; but this also is an unsoundness, and will be treated of as such.

It is generally considered that a moderately narrow chest is preferable to a wide one, but I do

not think there is any good reason for this. A wide-chested horse's fore legs are a considerable distance apart, while a narrow, deep-girthed horse's legs are close together. Now, of all the things which annoy owners of horses, and particularly young horses, two of the most common are a horse's back getting sore from the saddle pinching his withers, and horses cutting their fetlocks, by striking them in going, with the opposite foot.

Now, a wide-chested horse is exempt from both these evils. Again, a round, punchy carcase, with good back ribs, will more often, though not invariably, be found in conjunction with a thick, wide chest.

For these reasons I should prefer a horse that stood with his fore legs considerably apart.

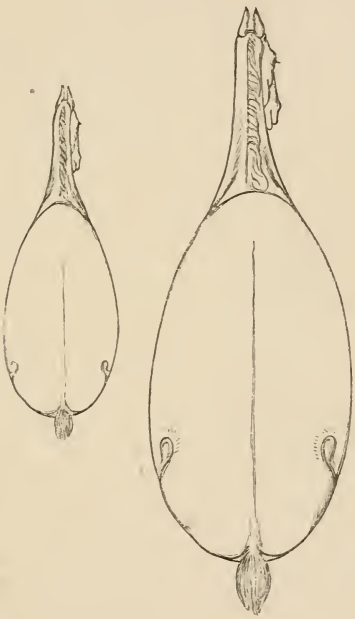
The third view of a horse is to stand behind him. This shows the width of the horse's hips and thighs, and whether his hocks are straight. Here, again, though a horse's hocks should look straight, it is better they should be too near together than too far apart. Looking from this point there are three curves on each side of the horse's hind quarters, the upper curves being the hips, the second the thighs, and the third curve the second thighs.

In a well-shaped horse the first and second curves should be the same width across the horse; the second, that is, the thighs, being if anything the widest; and the third curves rather narrower. Looking between the hind legs, the lower a horse's hind

quarters come down together before they split apart the better.

There is a fourth view of a horse which is rarely taken, but which I consider quite as important as the other three, and that is the view obtained by

Fig. 2.



looking down on them from above; that view, in fact, which you have of the wheelers of a coach when you are sitting on the box. Looking at them thus, the horse's body should be the same shape as a hen's egg, with the broad end towards the tail. The back

ribs will then be the broadest part of him, which they ought to be. If anyone were to draw an egg, and then put a tail on the thick end, and a neck and ears on the thin end, it would give them a very good idea of what a horse should look like when viewed from above. The ears should be near together and curve slightly inwards (Fig. 1).

CHAPTER III.

SHAPE—*continued.* SHOULDERS.

HAVING now looked carefully over the horse, we will take each part and examine it more particularly.

To begin with the head. Standing in front and looking at it, it should be narrow between the ears, wide between the eyes, and taper down till it is narrow again at the nostrils. The eyes should be large, prominent, and bold-looking, and the nostrils moderately large. I should say that a horse with a very large, open nostril would be delicate and nervous, and easily frightened, while one with a very small, closed nostril might be apt to be mulish and obstinate. Looking at the head sideways, it should be wide across the cheek, and narrow, but not too much so, across the mouth. The front outline should be straight, with a slight curve round the nostrils. What is called a dish nose is when there is a hollow between the eyes and nostrils; and a Roman nose means a projection between those two points. As a rule dish noses are better-tempered than Roman noses, but a straight profile is the best of the three.

The neck should be arched above and hollowed out below, and there should be a natural bend in it, so that when a horse holds his head up a good height, his nose is still nearly perpendicularly below his eyes, so that the horse is looking straight before him; this is what is meant by saying that a horse's head is well set on. If a horse's neck curves the wrong way and he lifts his head up high, he will be staring straight up in the sky, and his nose will be on a level with the roots of his ears.

I believe it would be found on measurement that a horse's neck is at right angles to the inclination of his shoulder, and that the more a horse's shoulder slopes the higher the top of his head would be when at rest in a natural position. If this be the case it would be one way of judging of a horse's shoulder, to notice how high he carried his head when standing in an easy position, and the higher he carried his head the better his shoulder would be. The top of a horse's neck, where the mane grows, should be thick and hard, and the mane itself thin and light.

We now come to one of the most important parts, viz. the shoulder, and there is nothing which is more puzzling to a beginner, and which good judges differ more about. Thus, a novice is shown a horse and told that he has a good shoulder, and finds out that another horse with a similar shoulder has not got good action when he comes to ride it. The reason of this is, that the shoulder he has had

pointed out as a good one, is *not* a good one—the horse's owner only thinks it is. Or again, a man looks at a horse's shoulder, and then, in order to form an estimate of it, he goes and looks at a great many other horses' shoulders, and finds that his horse's is as good as the average, and therefore concludes it is a good shoulder, and still the horse does not go right. The reason of this is that a good shoulder is a much rarer thing than he imagines, and that *none* of the horses he has looked at have had good shoulders, whereas he has naturally concluded that they could not all have been bad, which was not a correct conclusion. Therefore, if you are doubtful as to a horse's shoulder, don't go and look at another horse's shoulder, and particularly not one of a horse belonging to the same owner as the first, for if he is not a good judge of a shoulder he is just as likely to buy two horses with indifferent shoulders as one; but take some other means of finding out.

Now, there are three ways of finding out what a horse's shoulder is like. First, looking at him when he is standing still; secondly, watching him while in motion; and thirdly, riding him yourself and *feeling* his action. Of these plans all should be used, but the third is better than the second, and the second better than the first.

We will begin with the first method of examining the horse, namely, when he is standing still.

What is commonly meant by a horse's shoulder is one large flat bone called the scapula. This bone begins at the withers—that is, the point where the mane ends—and extends to the breast in a slanting direction; and the more it slants the better as a rule the horse's shoulder and action is. The upper bone of the leg, from the knee to the horse's body, is called the radius, and between this bone and the scapula, or shoulder, is a shorter bone, called the humerus. The humerus is slanting as well as the scapula, but in the contrary direction; that is, the bottom of the scapula and the top of the humerus are the forwardest. Now, it must be borne in mind that while the scapula is better placed the more it slants and the less upright it is, the humerus, on the other hand, is better placed the *less* it slants and the *more upright* it is.

It is want of knowledge of this fact which causes a horse's shoulders to be often wrongly estimated. People are apt to think that if two horses have the same inclination of the scapula their shoulders and action will be the same, whereas one horse may have very good shoulders and the other very moderate. If you take two horses with the same slant of the shoulder-bone, and the humerus of one is very much inclined, while the humerus of the other is nearly upright, the latter horse will have very much the better action of the two.

I need not point out that as the humerus is joined

at one end to the fore leg and at the other end to the shoulder-bone, it follows necessarily that the more upright the humerus is the further forward the fore leg must be, and the nearer horizontal the humerus is the further back from the breast the fore leg must be.

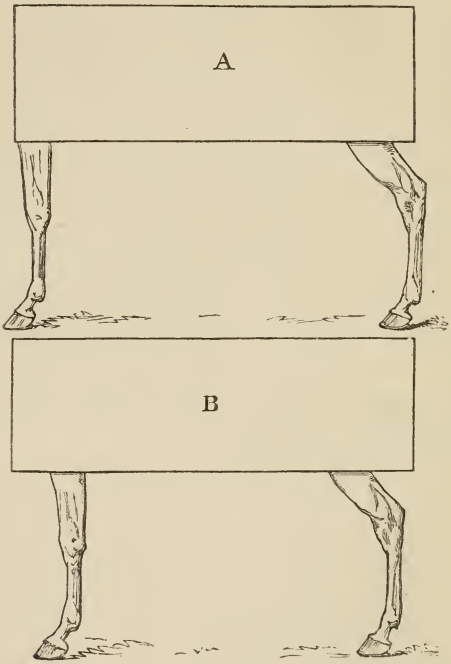
Now, if you run your eye in a line from the middle of the fore leg upwards and notice how much in front of the withers that line falls, and then notice how far behind the top of the humerus that line falls, you will have a fair idea of what the horse's shoulders are. The more that line falls in front of the top of the scapula and the less it falls behind the top of the humerus, the better will be the horse's action.

In examining a horse here you should feel where the top and bottom of the shoulder and the top and bottom of the humerus are; otherwise, and especially with flat, fleshy horses, your eye may be deceived and fall in the wrong place.

There is one very common error—at least, I submit that it is an error—made in estimating the merit of a horse's fore legs. Their strength, that is, the horses' strength, is generally estimated by the size of their fore leg below the knee; but this is not of itself at all an unerring guide. In each individual animal we shall find that the different parts are constructed in a manner fitted to fulfil what is required of them in the case of that animal taken by itself.

Now, if we consider a horse's body as a heavy cubic mass supported on four upright pillars, those pillars being the legs, it will be apparent that if two of those pillars are quite at one end of the weight supported, and two are quite at the other end, it will

Fig. 3.



be evident, I say, that the pressure on each pair of pillars will be equal; that is, each pair of legs will carry half the weight of the body (Fig. 3, A and B). Let us now, without moving either the body or the

hind legs, place the two front pillars (that is, the fore legs) two or three inches nearer the hind legs; that is, two or three inches from the front end (drawing B). It will be seen at once that the effect of this will be that much more weight will be supported by the two front pillars, and so much the less by the hind pillars. In order, therefore, to adapt the four pillars to this arrangement, the two front pillars will have to be made proportionately stronger, and the two hind pillars lighter.

Now, the worse a horse's shoulder is the more under its body will be the fore legs, and the stronger they will have to be formed to carry their share of that body.

It will often happen that there will be two horses apparently about the same size and weight, and people will say of one, 'It has got beautiful shoulders and action, but it is rather too small below the knee;' and they will say of the other, 'Its shoulders might certainly be a little better, but what a lot of bone it has below the knee!' Now, anyone who bought the straight-shouldered horse under the impression that he would carry a certain weight, say fourteen stone, better than the light-boned horse, would, in my opinion, be making a great mistake. It is true that the bigger fore legs can support the greater weight, but they *already* have to do that before anyone gets on them, and it does not follow that they can bear an *additional* weight better than the smaller and

better placed fore legs, much less that the large-boned horse's *fore and hind legs combined* should be capable of supporting a greater weight than the lighter-boned horse's legs, which are more perfectly and evenly adjusted.

For this reason people often look upon the size of a horse's fore legs below the knee as an enhancement of his value and an improvement in his proportions, when it is simply a provision of nature to counteract a defect in the horse's shape which the horse would be better without.

In choosing a horse, therefore, I would lay down as a rule, that even for *strength* alone, other things being equal, the position of a horse's shoulder and fore legs is of more importance than the size of them. In choosing a horse, therefore, you should bear in mind that a horse with a large muscular shoulder, and with his fore legs considerably behind the front of his breast, is no stronger, and is less pleasant and safe, than a horse whose shoulder and fore legs are lighter and better placed.

I would also point out that by using a shorter or longer saddle the weight of the rider can be placed nearer to or further from the hind legs or the fore legs at will, and that, in fact, with the same sized saddles on both horses, the formation of the good-shouldered horse will of itself place the saddle, and consequently the weight on the top of it, further back and nearer the hind legs, and thus throw less weight upon the fore legs.

We will now come to the judging of a horse's shoulders by watching his action while in motion.

I would here say that *as* the only reason why a good shoulder is better for riding is because the horse will have better and safer action with a good shoulder, therefore, if you are certain that a horse's action is good, there is no need to go any further.

All, therefore, that is required to be done is to be certain that the action really is good, and does not only seem so. In order to observe a horse's action properly he should be walked up and down in the road past you, and then trotted slowly round you in a large circle, and afterwards galloped round.

In walking he should carry his head well up, and walk freely and rapidly, with long strides; but the trot is the pace which tests a horse's action most. In order to trot well a horse should lift his knees up high and throw his feet forward a long way in front of his breast, and should trot fast. Some horses bend their knees and pick up their feet high, but cannot put them forward at all; that is, they put them down again under their chest instead of under their nose. This can be detected by comparing the pace they are moving their legs with the pace they are getting over the ground. If they appear to be moving their legs very rapidly, and still not to be going fast, their action is not good. They can trot pretty well over broken ground, but cannot go fast and cannot very well recover themselves if they stumble.

Other horses put their feet well forward, and go very fast over the ground, but do not bend their knees or lift up their feet. This kind of action, though of more use than the other, cannot be called good, for this reason, that a horse which goes like that, although he can travel fast on smooth, flat ground, cannot trot without tripping over broken or uneven ground. A horse with good action should lift his knee as high as the first instance I have given of faulty action and throw his feet as far forward as the second.

In addition to watching a horse's legs you should carefully observe the appearance the saddle and the rider present on the horse. If you take away all the neck and head in front of the horse's breast, the body of the rider should look to be in the middle of the horse, that is, half-way between his breast and his tail. A very good method of estimating a horse's make when someone else is riding him and you have not an opportunity of watching his action closely, is as follows: A saddle is composed of two parts, the back or body of the saddle, which lays on the horse's back, and the flaps, which come down his sides. The front of the saddle is one continuous line from the bottom of the flap to the pommel or top of the saddle, but behind the flap there is a corner where the flap and body meet. Now, to judge of a horse's shape, draw two imaginary lines from this corner, one to the lowest part of the horse's breast, and the other

to the furthest part of his hind quarters; these two lines, with an ordinary-sized saddle, *ought* to be, but rarely are, nearly of equal length. Generally the line drawn from this corner to the hind quarter is much longer than the line drawn to the breast; and the more difference there is the worse the horse's action will be as regards safety on uneven ground.

This is as good a method of forming an opinion of a horse at a glance as any I know. If a horse is much longer behind the saddle than in front of it, he may have very good action to look at, but if he stumbles he has much greater difficulty in picking himself up again without falling. I once had a singular confirmation of this in a pony which a man was riding alongside of me. It had sloping shoulders, but was very much longer behind the saddle than in front of it. It had very good action to look at, and trotted very fast—so much so that I thought my rule must be a fallacious one, when, just as I was beginning to doubt the correctness of my theory, it stumbled slightly, and then instead of picking itself up again, as it should have done, it went on its head and knees for some yards and rolled over..

After seeing a horse trot you should see it gallop; and here the chief thing to note is to see if its fore leg action corresponds with the hind leg action; that is, whether he puts his fore legs as far in front of him as he puts his hind legs under him, and *vice versâ*.

If a horse does not do this he will look as if he was taking a series of jumps and pitching down on to his fore legs, instead of going smoothly forwards; or he will look as if he was galloping with his fore legs and trailing his hind legs after him.

CHAPTER IV.

CHOOSING.

We now come to the last, and practically the best, method of determining a horse's shoulders and action.

I have put it last for this reason, that you can always look at a horse if you have the opportunity of riding it, but it often happens that you can see a horse without being able to ride it or even see it ridden.

In buying a horse at a crowded auction, for instance, you practically have to form your opinion of it as you see it standing. You cannot, of course, see an unbroken horse with a saddle and bridle on; while it may often happen that you have an opportunity of seeing a horse ridden (in the hunting-field or on a racecourse, for instance) when it would not be convenient for you to ride it yourself; but when you have the opportunity, you can form the best judgment by getting on them yourself.

I will here quote what 'Nimrod,' the author of 'The Turf, the Chase, and the Road,' says on this head in one of his works. He says: 'When I wish to judge of a horse's action I require to do nothing more than

to give him his head and let him walk a hundred yards on a footpath. If he can do that without tripping it is all that is required.'

When I first read the above I was rather sceptical as to the wisdom of this advice; and having a mare whose shoulders I knew were not very good, I determined to put the plan to the test. I accordingly rode her a mile away from home where there was a good flat raised footpath on the side of the road, and then put her on the footpath and let her walk home with the reins on her neck. She stumbled twenty times in the course of the mile, and convinced me that 'Nimrod' in this particular was right. If I had ridden her in the middle of the road that distance she probably would not have stumbled once.

It does not at first strike one as apparent why a horse should be more likely to stumble when walking leisurely along a footpath than when walking along the road, but the reason I take to be this, that although there are inequalities on the footpath they are not so apparent to the horse's eye as those on the road, and the horse consequently does not make the same effort to avoid them, but walks in a more natural, not to say slovenly, manner, and thus shows any defect in its action, and consequently in its shape, more quickly and more distinctly.

This method recommended by 'Nimrod' is a very good one, but I have found the following to be as good or better: Ride the horse along the road until you come somewhere where there is a footpath or

piece of grass raised six or eight inches above the road. Now ride the horse quietly a few yards along the raised edge of the footpath at a walk, and then, letting his head remain quite loose, turn him slightly so that he steps off the footpath slantways on to the road.

If his shoulders are good he will step off without any difficulty, and if you had your eyes shut you would not be able to tell when he did so. If his shoulders are bad he will either stumble, or drop heavily on to the foot he puts first on the road, so that he gives you a disagreeable shock up your backbone.

You will probably think the first time you do this that the horse has made a false step or stumbled, but if you repeat it three or four times you will find that he always does the same thing, and that it is the fault of his make, and he cannot help doing it.

I have tried this plan on several horses, and have always found the test to answer. The explanation I take to be this.

When a horse's shoulders are good he can step down a foot or nearly so and reach the ground with one foot before he takes the weight off his other foot. When the horse's shoulders are straight he cannot do this, and comes down heavily on the foot he first puts off the raised part on to the lower.

In addition to this, if you trot a horse slowly over rough, broken, ground, he will go freely and pleasantly and safely, if his shoulders are good; and if not he will not go pleasantly, and will feel as if he

could not *get on*. If you trot him slowly on the road or the grass, if his shoulders are good his fore legs will feel as if they were always in front of you; if his shoulders are straight his fore legs will feel as if they were mostly underneath you.

While on the subject of riding a horse to test his action I may say, that in order to detect any very slight lameness you should, if it is in the hind legs, put your horse in a slow trot and then sit as far back in the saddle as you can *without rising*.

To test the fore legs take hold of the horse's mane and stand up in your stirrups while he is trotting slowly. By adopting this plan you can often tell whether a horse is lame in front or behind, and which leg he is lame of, when you cannot otherwise find out.

We now come in our survey of the horse to his body, back, and ribs. The size of his body, I need not say, will be influenced a good deal by the condition he is in, and the food he is eating. A horse eating green food in summer will have a bigger body than when eating hay, and a fat horse will have a bigger body than a thin one living on the same food. But it must be remembered that a thin horse getting grass will often have a bigger body than a fatter horse living on hard meat, that is, hay and corn. In all cases when a horse is living on dry food his back ribs should be the *widest* part of him, and his fore ribs the *deepest* part of him. The depth of a

horse does not always give a correct measure of his size; for a very narrow horse, with his fore legs close together, will be deeper than a horse with a wider chest, and will look stronger when you stand alongside of him, although in reality he may be weaker than the other. You should, therefore, always measure a horse's depth of girth with a view to his width of chest also.

A horse's back should fall immediately behind his withers, and then rise gradually to the part between his hip bones, and then fall slightly to the tail again; there should be a gradual, even sweep, and no break or kink anywhere between his withers and his tail.

It will generally be found that a horse with very good shoulders is one of three things, when you look at him sideways—he will either be short-shouldered, hollow-backed, or goose-rumped.

By short-shouldered I mean that he will not look as deep from the withers, or top of his shoulder, to the bottom of his shoulder-bone as other horses.

By hollow-backed I mean that he will be several inches lower a little way behind the withers than he is at the withers and loins; and being goose-rumped means having the tail set on a good deal lower than the hips and loins, instead of being only a little lower.

I do not say that it is invariably the case that

a good-shouldered horse comes under one of these denominations, for that I have no means of ascertaining; I will only say that of all the horses I have seen I never remember seeing one with very good shoulders, that was not one of the three.

Of these three I should prefer a hollow back, if I had my choice. A horse with a goose-rump has a more or less unsightly appearance in proportion to the amount of inclination of the hind quarters; while a short-shouldered horse, though I believe he is really as strong as other horses in proportion, always looks lighter and weaker to the eye, in his fore quarter, than he should do.

We now come to the horse's hind quarters. There are two unsoundnesses in the hind legs which horses are more subject to than any others. They are both in the hocks, that is, the joints which correspond to the knees in the fore legs, and both are easily detected. One of these species of unsoundness is called having curbs, the other spavins. I shall describe both of these in the chapter devoted to unsoundness, and will not, therefore, treat of them here.

Looking sideways at a horse, his hind quarters should look broad and level, from the hip-bone to the tail and hock.

His hocks should look broad and flat, and not round; his pasterns, that is, the ankle joints, should be in a perpendicular line under the point of his

hocks. The tail should be set on lower than the hip-bone, but not much; otherwise it will detract from the horse's appearance very much; and though a low goose-rump is serviceable the horse will not sell for as much with it. Horses with low set-on tails often have their hind legs bent under them, which is not a recommendation.

Standing behind the horse, the thighs should be *rather* wider than the hips, and the hock sharp and thin, and not round and clumsy.

Having now given my reader an idea how to judge of the shape and outline of a horse, independently of his size, breeding, or the purpose you want him for, I will endeavour to instruct him as to the choice of a horse, and give him some general rules which will assist him in selecting one that he will not be disappointed with. I will begin by pointing out that, as no one except a good judge with experience ought to buy a horse without either a veterinary surgeon's opinion or a warranty, he should not, therefore, give his mind too much to simply detecting faults, and thereby prejudice his judgment as to the general merits of the animal.

Many a man has done this, and the result has been that he has bought a horse which has been possessed of no good qualities or merit at all, *except* being free from unsoundness, and which was next to useless to him when he had got him. A horse may be perfectly sound and yet have no constitution to

enable him to stand any work worth speaking of, nor action enough for anyone to ride him with pleasure, and no good looks to enable you to sell him again when you are sick of him.

Anyone buying a horse ought chiefly to consider first, what he wants to use him for; secondly, what sized horse he wants; and thirdly, how much money he can afford to give for him.

CHAPTER V.

PRICE.

Now, with regard to the third point, that of price. A good horse's value increases very much for each inch that he measures over fifteen hands, or five feet, up to sixteen hands and an inch, or five feet five. Horses below fifteen hands come under the head of cobs or ponies, and have a separate and distinct value of their own; and horses above sixteen one are of no greater value than horses of that height or an inch less. But between those limits —fifteen hands and sixteen one—a horse's value increases very largely inch by inch.

Therefore it follows that, taking any given price, the smaller the animal (within those limits) that you are content to put up with, the more perfect a specimen of his own particular class you can obtain. Thus, let us take, for instance, 100*l.* as a price. For this price you could probably have the choice of a great many well-shaped, sound horses between fifteen and fifteen one and a half. You would have

the choice of a few between fifteen one and a half and fifteen two and a half, while you could not perhaps obtain one sound, well-bred horse with good looks at that price that measured sixteen hands. As a rule a man will have more pleasure in possessing and using a good small horse than a moderate horse of greater size.

Therefore settle what is the *most* money you can give, and what is the *least* size you can do with, and then get the best you can of that size and at that price. The same rules will apply very nearly, whether you want to buy a hack or hunter or a harness horse; but I will imagine that you are going to buy a hunter, for a hack is only a smaller hunter, and any horse that will do to ride will do to drive, and the same merits apply equally in both cases. Now, in buying a horse to hunt a man must, next to the question of price, be guided by his own weight. The heavier he is, the stronger horse he will require, and the higher price he will have to pay for a horse of any given height; or, to put it the converse way, the heavier he is the smaller horse he must put up with at any given price.

Perhaps I shall be better understood if I say that a man who weighs ten stone can get a horse up to *his* weight for a given price, say 100*l.*, two inches taller, than the one a man who weighs thirteen stone can get for the same money up to *his* weight.

CHAPTER VI.

ABILITY TO CARRY WEIGHT.

A MAN who has experience can form an opinion of what weight a horse will carry, by looking him over, although even then, I believe, men of good judgment often make great mistakes in the comparative ability of horses to carry weight.

As I said before, if two horses are both symmetrical the biggest horse will be the strongest; and the biggest horse means the one there is the most of, *taking him altogether*.

Of two horses, therefore, in similar condition as to fatness, the heaviest horse is the biggest, and the biggest is the strongest.

Therefore the proper way to ascertain the strength of a horse is to *weigh* him, making a certain allowance for the condition he is in.

As a rough-and-ready rule, if a horse, well-formed and in fair hunting condition, is weighed, he will be found able to carry about nineteen per cent. of his own weight; that is, a horse to carry fourteen stone

ought to weigh about seventy-four to seventy-five stone when in condition and not drawn too fine.

You may also lay down a rule that the better bred a horse is the better he will carry any weight that he *can* carry; and the less blood there is in a horse's breeding the greater weight they can carry at their own pace; that is, a half-bred horse will carry the *most* weight in proportion to his own weight, and the thoroughbred horse will carry what he *can* carry the better of the two.

The amount of breeding required in a hunter depends very much on the country he is wanted for and the sort of rider he has to carry. As a rule, the harder the rider, and the more open the country, the better bred the horse ought to be. Fences stop hounds more than they do horses, and the smaller the enclosures and the larger the fences, the easier it is for a horse that can jump, to keep pace with the hounds, and the less speedy, and therefore the less well-bred, is it necessary for the hunter to be.

Again, the deeper the ground the better bred the hunter ought to be. The contrary opinion to this used formerly to be held even by good judges; but experience has shown that the above rule is the correct one.

It was formerly thought that bone was wanted to get through dirt, and blood to keep up with hounds over grass, whereas the contrary is the case. It does not at first sight appear how it is that the light-

boned thoroughbred horse can carry a comparatively heavy man through deep ploughed fields further and faster than the more strongly-built half-bred hunter. The explanation, I take it, is this: the slower a horse goes compared with his best pace the longer he can last without being beat. Now, at the pace at which hounds ordinarily run, the thoroughbred horse is only going at half speed, that is, at a canter, while the half-bred horse, being much slower, has to go at full gallop, or nearly so. It is generally explained by saying that a thoroughbred horse will stay longer than a half-bred horse; but I do not think it is at all clearly proved that a thoroughbred horse can gallop *at the top of his speed*, for a longer time than the half-bred horse at the top of his; but being much faster he will cover considerably more ground in that time.

CHAPTER VII.

TEMPER.

In choosing a horse for hunting, in addition to the size and strength and breeding of the horse, the purchaser will have to consider the horse's disposition, constitution, age, and capabilities.

Here again it will in a great measure depend on what he wants him to do, and how he wants to ride him—whether particular qualities are necessary or immaterial. And here the horse's qualities should in some degree resemble those of his rider. Thus a resolute, hard horse will carry an irritable, hasty man, better than a nervous, timid horse would. A noted jumper is wasted on a rider who never wants to jump a fence, or who only rides at very small places. If a man is possessed of a hard, strong constitution he should endeavour to get a horse with the same qualities, as he will most likely go out in all weathers and ride long distances, and would tire out and knock up a horse that might carry another rider pretty well, who did not want to get so much

work out of his horses. Again, some horses can go out hunting much oftener in a given time than others, and this quality is exceedingly valuable to a man who only keeps one or two horses and wishes to get out as often as possible, while it does not make much matter to a man with a large stud. With regard to the horse's age, a horse is never so good before he is six years old as he is afterwards. Many horses are hunted at three and four years old, and almost all horses at five, and they will go as well while they are out as an older horse; but the objection to them is that they are never so pleasant to ride, and that they cannot come out so often, and that they are always liable to be knocked up and rendered useless for some time after, whenever you happen to ride them a harder day than usual. In addition to this they are much more likely to get lamed, for two reasons: first, their sinews are softer and they are more easily injured; and, secondly, they are wilder and more likely to do something that will injure them.

There are a very great number of horses lamed by riding them to hounds when not fully developed, and if it could become the custom to either ride them solely on the road, or confine them to light harness work, until they are of a suitable age for hunting, there would be more sound horses than there are.

CHAPTER VIII.

MOUTH.

In choosing a hunter a feature of great importance is, what sort of mouth he has; that is, how much and in what manner he pulls at the bridle.

Every horse has either a hard or a light mouth; that is, he can bear you to pull at his head with a sharp bridle without irritating him, or he cannot.

But a hard-mouthed horse may be a hard puller or he may not be a hard puller, and a light-mouthed horse may be a hard puller or he may not be a hard puller, for this depends on the horse's temper as much as his mouth.

When a horse is said to pull hard, it simply means that he won't go the pace you want him to go, and he won't stop when you want him to stop, and that he does not pay the proper attention to your wishes when you pull at him.

I should classify the four descriptions of horses as follows:—

A hard puller with a hard mouth is the most dangerous, for he is the most difficult to stop.

A hard puller with a light mouth is the most unpleasant, for his mouth cannot bear the pain that his own temper inflicts on him, and he will always be throwing his head about.

A hard-mouthed horse which does not pull is the safest for bad or moderate riders; and a light-mouthed horse which does not pull is the best and most pleasant for a finished horseman.

A man who has habitually a rough hold of the bridle, and who holds himself on at every jump by means of the reins, would find a hard-mouthed horse both safer and pleasanter than a light-mouthed horse, and he would be very apt to make a light-mouthed horse make a mistake at his fences by not letting him have his head at liberty.

CHAPTER IX.

RIDING ON THE ROAD.

I WILL now proceed to another part of my subject, and that is the art of riding a horse on the road.

Now, what is the first requisite to enable you to ride a horse with pleasure and safety? The first requisite, I take it, is that you should be quite certain that you can always stop him when you want to stop him.

The second requisite is that you should always be able to make him go on when you want him to go on.

I have given the first the precedence for this reason, that if you can't make a horse go on when you want, you only suffer inconvenience as a rule; whereas when you can't stop a horse when you want, your safety may be endangered.

Now, for a horse to be properly broke and trained you ought to be able to set him going at any pace, and he ought to continue at that pace, with his head loose, until you require him to alter it. But hardly any horse will fulfil these conditions.

Very many horses will walk quietly with the reins loose on their neck, and you can gallop them at their top speed without pulling at them, for the simple reason that they cannot go any faster. But few will trot pleasantly with their heads loose, and fewer still will canter.

Again, a horse to be properly trained should stand still without being held while the rider mounts. By without being held I mean without being held either by the rider or anyone else; but how many horses are there that will do this? He should also stand still with his head loose whenever his rider wishes to stop and converse with anyone or to look at anything.

Most horses are capable of being taught all this, but they will not do it, partly because they are not taught to do it, and partly because they are actually taught to do the contrary.

Thus, for instance, in galloping after the hounds a horse is taught and *made* to bear a certain weight on the rider's hands; that is to say, a man will pull at his horse's head and spur him at the same time.

This is popularly called holding him together, and is supposed to be the most necessary when galloping over rough, uneven ground, but I cannot help thinking that if a horse's four legs will not keep him from tumbling down, the rider's hands cannot do so, and that if a horse's own eyes cannot show

him the inequalities in the ground the bridle will not be of much avail to do so.

There is no doubt that a horse which has always been accustomed to have his head carried for him by his rider, and has learnt to accommodate his action to that method of going, would not, if suddenly allowed to go with his head loose, behave altogether in a satisfactory manner. If the horse was fresh he would probably run away, and if he were tired he might possibly tumble down, from being deprived of an assistance that he has become accustomed to and dependent on.

But if a horse had always been in the habit of going with his head loose, and had never been taught differently, he would, in my opinion, go just as safely and much more pleasantly than when ridden in the ordinary manner.

This plan would also be found to be very much more safe under the following circumstances:—It often happens that, from one cause or another, such as a horse stumbling or shying, or jumping higher or further than was expected, the rider is thrown partially off his balance, and loses his hold of the horse's head for a moment. Now, if the horse is in the habit of going with his head loose, it will make no difference to him; but if, as is usually the case, he is in the habit of having his head held, then as soon as he finds it at liberty he will go off like a shot,

and will often succeed in completing the discomfiture of his rider, who is already partly unseated.

I will now point out a few things to be attended to which will enable anyone to improve their method of riding, and dealing with their horse generally. This does not come under the head of breaking in a young horse that has never had a rider, but assumes that the horse is accustomed to being ridden. In order to ride the horse it is first necessary to mount him, and here at the very outset the defective nature of his education shows, for very few horses fresh from the breaker's hands will stand still to be mounted without being held tight by the man who is going to mount him, and many of them require to be held by someone else as well.

One of the best ways of teaching a horse not to do anything you don't want him to do is to arrange matters so that it is difficult, if not impracticable, for him to do what you don't want him to do.

Now, it is impossible for a horse to move forward when there is a brick wall immediately in front of his head, and therefore, when you want to cure him of moving forward as you are getting up, you should turn him with his head to a wall. Most young horses are often mounted in the stableyard, and the best way of mounting them is to lead them out of the stable, and then turn them round and shut the stable-door. The horse can then only move to one side or the other; and it is much easier to prevent

them from doing this when you are getting on the saddle, than it is to prevent them from going forward.

If a horse is mounted a few times in this manner, and you adjust yourself leisurely on the saddle before you turn him round, he will acquire a habit of standing still while he is being mounted, even with his head loose.

It often happens, however, that you want to mount him when you are in some place where you cannot put his head against a wall; for instance, if you dismount on a road. In this case you should turn him with his head the way you don't want him to go, and then when you have got settled in the saddle turn him round. If he moves on while you are mounting he will find that he always has to turn round and go back again, and he will learn not to try and proceed in a direction which he finds from experience is not the one in which he has to go. As soon as he is mounted he should walk quietly off with his head loose without trying to break into a trot. If the horse will not do this, and keeps trying to trot, it is better to let him trot gently for half a mile or so at starting, till he settles down, than to keep fidgetting him; but in this case you should take another opportunity of teaching him, so that he may learn to walk.

The proper time to teach a horse to walk well is when he is tolerably tired and hungry and has got his head turned homewards. The fatigue will

prevent him from perpetually wanting to trot, and hunger will make him put the best leg foremost to get home to his stable and corn. When he is accustomed to walk well and fast, and to continue at that pace without altering it, he will walk whenever you require him.

Next to learning to walk he should be taught to trot, and here the reverse process should be adopted.

In this case you should teach him to trot when he is fresh instead of tired, and when he has his head away from home instead of to it.

When he is fresh and full of life he will lift his feet and throw them out, better and with more vigour than when he is tired; and when he has his head turned from home he will not pull so hard, and will be more easily taught to go with his head loose, because he will not be so anxious to get to his destination.

It would not, in my opinion, take any longer to teach an unbroken horse to trot with his head loose than to walk; but, as I am supposing that the horse is already broken, he will probably be much more troublesome to teach to trot than to walk, in this manner. The way to teach him is to start him at the pace you want him to go, and when he has gone a little way slacken his rein. He will most probably start on quicker, and then you should pull at him rather sharply, and speak to him at the same time; but as soon as he returns to the pace you want him

to go, you should slacken his head again, but without speaking to him. If he goes quicker again, you should repeat the process, but you should not do it more than half a dozen times in succession, or you will upset the horse, and he will get puzzled and frightened and not know what you want him to do, and then you cannot teach him any more for that lesson; so that after doing this a few times you should either pull him up into a walk, or let him trot in the manner he is accustomed to, with his mouth slightly feeling the pressure of the bit. When a horse has become so tractable as to trot the pace you want him to go, with his head loose, when he first comes out of the stable, I should consider that he has learnt a good deal—more, in fact, than many horses learn in their lifetime.

When a horse is trotting freely along without being pulled at, he will carry his head higher, and look better than when he is ridden in the ordinary manner. Most people conversant with horses will have noticed that when a horse is turned out and is trotting about in a field, or when he gets away from his rider from any cause, he will carry his head much higher than he does at other times, and will, to use a common phrase, 'show himself off more.' No one, I should fancy, ever saw a horse stumble and fall when going like this, and this is the way they ought to go when they are ridden. Instead of this you often see them going with their heads low, pulling

hard, and leaning a great weight on the rider's hands—so much so, that if the reins suddenly broke there would be danger of their overbalancing themselves and pitching forward on their heads.

I do not go so far as to say that every horse would go safely and pleasantly when taught to go in the manner I have here advocated; but I am supposing that the rider has got such a horse as I have endeavoured to describe, as the proper sort to ride.

A bad-shouldered, badly-proportioned, bad-tempered horse will not go pleasantly in this manner; but neither will he go pleasantly in any other form, and he had better not be ridden at all.

We now come to cantering and galloping. Horses are not cantered on a road so much as they are trotted, and are rarely galloped.

Nearly the same observations will apply to horses cantering as to trotting. The horse ought to canter with his head loose the pace you want him to go, but he will probably want his mouth slightly feeling at this pace.

Horses canter with one leg in advance of the other, both before and behind, and the right or off leg is considered to be the proper one to have advanced, particularly for ladies, who use this pace chiefly. Going with the right or off fore leg in advance is called cantering with the right leg first; and going with the near or left leg in advance is called going with the wrong leg first. I do not, however, think

it is of much importance which leg a horse puts in advance, especially when a man is riding him.

There is, I think, great misapprehension on the subject of the difference between cantering and galloping. A real gallop is quite a distinct pace from the canter, but horses rarely gallop. What people generally mean by horses galloping is simply a quicker canter. In the real proper gallop the horse's fore feet come to the ground simultaneously and close together, neither of them in advance of the other; and the hind feet also come to the ground together, but very wide apart, and not one in front of the other. In a canter or ordinary gallop the fore legs come to the ground one after another, and one in front of the other, and the hind legs the same, in both fore and hind legs the one that is forwardest in point of position being brought to the ground the last in point of time.

Ponies gallop the true gallop oftener than horses, and compact, cobby, short horses oftener than long, sprawling, lathy ones.

Anyone who has ever been run away with for a hundred yards or so, especially on a pony, will know that it has a totally different feel to an ordinary gallop.

Racehorses, as far as my observation goes, rarely gallop, properly speaking; in fact, I never remember having seen a horse finish a race at a gallop unless it

was Fisherman, whose pace more nearly resembled a true gallop than any other I have seen.

Fig. 4.

I have endeavoured to show in a diagram the

tracks left by a horse in the four different paces, walk, trot, canter, and gallop; but it must be remembered that there is a great difference between the marks left by one horse and another, even when going at the same pace.

In order the more readily to distinguish between the hind and fore legs, I have made the fore shoe marks circular, and the hinder triangular.

While on the subject of riding on a road, or rather of teaching a horse to go properly on a road when ridden, it will be as well to mention a few of the commonest faults indulged in by horses under those circumstances.

I have already mentioned one of the common faults, namely, not standing still to be mounted, and have shown how to cure it. Now, one of the commonest faults in nearly all horses—so common as to be almost universal, and an excessively troublesome fault—is one which I have never seen alluded to in any book, or mentioned as a fault. I will call it, in the absence of any other name, 'taking advantage,' as this will give the reader the best idea of what the fault is. It is this: you are riding leisurely along, either at a walk or slow trot, and you have occasion to alter your position on the saddle—to take your pocket-handkerchief out of a coat-tail pocket, for instance, to blow your nose, or to look at something on the ground under the horse's track, to adjust your stirrup, &c. The horse immediately begins to trot;

or, if trotting already, quickens his pace. The rider, having only one hand on the reins, and the reins loose, cannot stop the horse in a moment, and when he does pull him up the horse often throws his head up and altogether disconcerts his rider. This trick is repeated invariably whenever the rider attempts to move and takes one hand from the bridle. Now, I believe that this vice (for it really amounts to that) does not take its origin at all from the nature or temper of the horse, but is entirely the result of education; that is, the horse does it because he has inadvertently been taught to do it. And if a horse had not been broken at all, and a man were on his back, he would not do this particular trick, however bad he might be to ride in other ways. I will, therefore, first point out how the mischievous habit is acquired; and secondly, how to avoid it.

Anyone who is in the habit of riding will know that when their horse is walking, and they wish him to quicken his pace, they generally proceed as follows.

First, they are aware by experience that when the horse begins to trot he will pull harder than when he is walking; so that they almost mechanically tighten their hold of his head; secondly, they kick him gently with their heels, but very often they do not really touch him at all with their heels, but only cause a slight pressure of the calves of the legs against the horse's sides; and thirdly, to avoid being jolted, they slightly shift their position and lean forward.

Now, the horse very soon gets to associate these motions with the idea of quickening his pace, and soon gets to take any motion on the part of his rider as an indication that he has to quicken his pace, and consequently he invariably starts off whenever his rider does any thing except sit perfectly still. It is not a very easy matter to cure a broken horse that has acquired this habit, but a horse that has not been taught it can easily be prevented from learning it by simply adopting some other means of setting him going. The proper way to do this is to start him by your voice, or by hitting him with your whip or stick behind the saddle; and it is best to adopt both of these plans simultaneously, for this reason, that if you strike a horse without at the same time speaking to him you will startle him; and if he is a nervous, sensitive horse you may frighten him considerably; while if you teach him to start at a given word you are liable to start him when you don't intend.

You can easily teach a horse to trot when you say 'Trot,' and to gallop when you say 'Gallop.' But if you do this the horse will *always* begin to gallop when you say 'Gallop;' and if you were riding with a friend and inadvertently introduced the word *gallop* into your conversation the horse would set off at full speed, which might prove very inconvenient. Now, you can hardly both hit the horse with your whip and tell him to trot or canter at the same time, without intending to do so.

It will be observed that I have said you should hit the horse *behind* the saddle; the reason is, that you sometimes hit your horse when you don't want him to go on. For instance, if he shies or is fidgetty, or is not looking where he is going and stumbles, or any other reason.

Now, the horse cannot distinguish what you are hitting him for, if you always hit him in the same place, whatever you want him to do; but if you always hit him in one part when you want him to go on, and in another when you want to correct him, he will be quite capable of distinguishing between the two, and understanding what you mean.

For this reason I should recommend a rider to always hit his horse behind the saddle when he wants him to go on, and always hit him in front of the saddle when he wants anything else. By this means he will often avoid that unpleasant state of things which is technically described as 'falling out with his horse,' which is both unpleasant and mutually injurious to the temper.

Two of the commonest faults on a road are shying or refusing to pass anything, and stumbling or tripping.

As regards stumbling it arises from one of two causes: either from the horse having straight shoulders, and consequently bad action, or from the horse being careless and not looking where he is going, and putting his foot on a stone or some other

uneven substance. When it arises from the first cause, namely, bad action, the horse is liable to fall; but he is not very liable to fall when it arises from the second cause, carelessness, unless the horse is careless and has bad shoulders as well, in which case he may easily come down.

The reason why there is a difference is this: a horse does not fall because he stumbles, but because when he *does* stumble he is not nimble enough to recover himself, and *this* arises from his shoulders not being properly placed.

I once heard a story which illustrates this in a remarkable degree.

A man bought a horse, and after some time was asked by a friend whether the horse was a safe horse to ride, on which he replied that he could not tell, as the horse had never stumbled with him up to that time. This was repeated as a good joke, but it is strict sense, for a bad-shouldered horse may be so careful that he hardly ever makes a false step; but he would for all that be as likely as not to come down if he did stumble, owing to his inability to recover himself; while a better shouldered horse might often trip from carelessness and not be in so much danger of falling as the other.

I should sum up the case of stumbling, therefore, thus: if you *know* that your horse has good shoulders he may not fall though he stumbles: but if you are not *certain* of that, he most probably stumbles be-

cause he has bad shoulders; and nearly certainly when he tumbles down has bad shoulders. Stumbling cannot be cured and cannot be prevented very well.

With regard to the other fault, that of shying or refusing to pass anything, it also arises from one of two causes: temper combined with stupidity, or else inexperience combined with timidity.

A bad-tempered, intelligent horse is not likely to shy, while a timid horse will pass most things when he is used to them, and a bold horse will pass things when he is not used to them.

Usually horses are made worse by the methods adopted to make them pass anything. Their head is turned to it, and they are flogged or forced up to it; and very often when they have gone past it they are turned round and ridden past it again. All these modes of proceeding are quite wrong; and it is also quite wrong to make a fuss over them and pet them, to induce them to go by a thing.

If you are proceeding along a road and your horse is frightened at an object that is *stationary* you should do *nothing* at all, but let him go past it in any way and at any pace he likes; but you should speak roughly to him, to take off his attention and show him that you do not approve of his behaviour. The object you should endeavour to impress on him is, that it is necessary to proceed on his way, but how or in what manner he gets past the object is a matter of total indifference to you as long as he *does* get

past it; and you should *never* after he *has* passed it either correct him or praise him, as both of these have a tendency to magnify the importance of the event, whereas you want it to dwell on his mind as little as possible. If instead of merely shying he turns round and won't pass it, I should as a rule go away and leave the object, if I could do so without inconvenience, and probably the next time you came that way the horse would pass it without any trouble or difficulty arising.

If the object at which the horse is frightened is a moving one it will either be going the same way as you are or else it will be meeting you. In the first instance you should let your horse follow it with his head loose till he does go past it.

In the second you should turn your horse with his back to it and make him stand still till the object has passed, and then turn round again and go on. In this way the horse will not see the object of which he is afraid, until it is practically past him and the road is clear, and this is the only thing you ought to do. It may be laid down as a strict rule, *never try to force your horse past a moving object that is meeting you.*

It may be thought that if your horse shies and you don't guide his head, but let him have it quite loose, he will be liable to run into a ditch. In harness it is possible he might run the wheels of the carriage into the ditch, but it is very unlikely he

will go in himself when ridden ; but if you are afraid of his doing so, all you have to do is to pull his head *away* from the side he is shying at. His eyes will then fall on the ditch or hedge instead of the object he is frightened of. But I should myself prefer doing nothing at all and treating his behaviour as if it was a matter of total indifference to me. The horse will then soon forget all about the matter, which is what I should want him to do.

CHAPTER X.

SHOEING.

THERE are in the care of a horse four things which come particularly under the notice of the owner of a horse, and are of great importance both to the horse and to his rider; these are shoeing, feeding, saddling, and bridling.

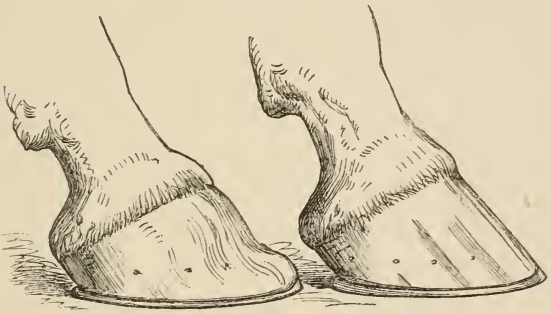
To begin with shoeing. If anyone wishes to become completely puzzled and mystified, let him go to his blacksmith and ask him to explain the merits of his particular method of shoeing. I need not say that if a horse's foot has any peculiarity, or if he has any failing in his feet, his shoes will have to be adapted to meet that defect; but of this matter, with the exception of one or two observations on the commonest defects, I do not intend to treat, as I am supposing the case of a horse with sound, properly-shaped feet and no particular defect.

To begin, therefore, with the horse's feet. If a horse is sound and free from disease I do not think the shape and make of his feet are matters of so much importance as is generally supposed.

A narrow, mulish foot is supposed to be a defective one, but mules, and ponies, which often have mulish feet, are as sound or sounder and are more enduring than horses. Again, flat, large feet are not approved of, but I never heard of any harm happening to any horse or its rider in consequence of the horse having such feet.

If a horse has thin, flat feet, and there is a crack in the toe as if you had split his toe up a little way,

Fig. 5.



he should be rejected, as it will be difficult to cure, and liable to return.

A horse's two fore feet and two hind feet should, I need not say, both be alike; the fore feet should be circular and the hind feet oval, that is, they should leave marks in the ground of that shape. They should show a straight edge looking at them sideways from the coronet, that is, where the hair and hoof join, to the sole where the hoof and shoe meet, and should not bulge out or cave in.

The outside upper part of a horse's foot is called the wall, and the underneath part, where it is hard, is called the sole; and where it is soft is called the frog.

It is necessary that when the horse is shod the weight of the horse should rest on the wall of his foot, and not on the sole, when the horse is standing on hard ground. When the horse is on soft ground the foot sinks in, so that the weight rests on the whole of the foot, and not solely on that part to which the shoe is affixed; but if, when the whole weight of the horse rests on the shoe, any part of the sole of the horse rests on the shoe, then the horse is liable to get corns. The precaution, therefore, to be taken in shoeing a horse is to make the shoe so that none of the shoe presses on the sole when it is first put on, and also to make it so that there is no likelihood as time goes on and the horse wears the shoe, of its *getting* to press on the sole.

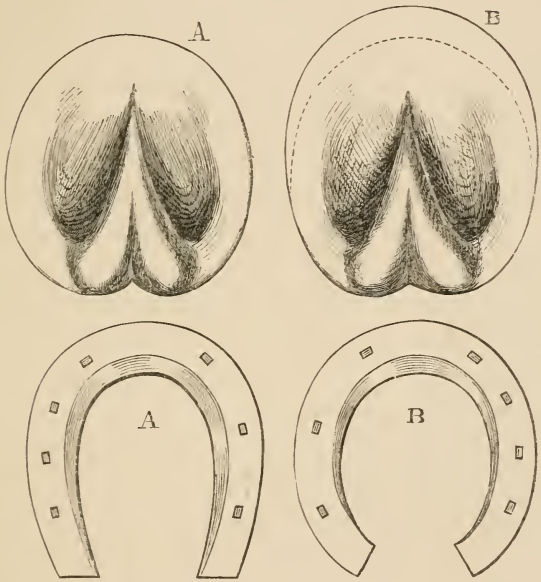
Now, the first of these two points blacksmiths generally guard against, but the second precaution they often neglect and do not pay attention to it; that is, they put the shoe on so that it is right at the time of shoeing, but do not make it so that it will be right when the horse has had it on a fortnight or three weeks. This will be best shown by a diagram which I subjoin.

Foot A shows the shape of the horse's hoof when the shoe is put on, and foot B is the same hoof after it has grown longer.

Shoe A is the right sort of shoe, and shoe B the wrong sort.

It will be seen that if you nail shoe A to foot A, when foot A has grown into foot B, the shoe A will be in the right position, only rather shorter in propor-

Fig. 6.



tion to the length of the foot; whereas, if you nail shoe B on foot A, although it will be right when first put on, yet when foot A has developed into foot B the heels of shoe B will be pressing on the sole of the foot instead of the wall or crust, and the horse will be liable to get corns. If any reader will cut

out of a piece of paper the two shoes A and B and will then fit them, first to foot A and then to foot B, the difference will be at once apparent.

The bottoms of road shoes are made flat, both in the fore and hind shoes, and hunting shoes are generally made with a flat sole in the front shoes and a round sole in the hind shoes; but I should prefer all four shoes to be made with the under surface—that is, the surface which rests on the ground—rounded.

The heels of the fore shoes should not project much beyond the heels of the feet, or there will be danger of the horse's tearing them off by catching his hind feet in them when galloping or trotting in soft ground; but the heels must project a little beyond the feet, or as the foot grows they will soon be pressing on the sole.

The hind shoes should not in any case have sharp edges about them anywhere, or there is danger of the horse cutting his fore feet with them, which is called overreaching. Hunting hind shoes are generally made with one heel slightly turned down and the other thickened to match it, and the object of this is to prevent the horse slipping when taking-off at a jump. It answers the purpose for which it was intended, and is no injury to the horse that I know of. It is called a caulking. There is also a bit of the shoe turned up and let into the toe of the horse's hoof. This is called a clip, and the

object of it is to prevent the shoe from being displaced by concussion or otherwise.

The shoe should be nailed on with most of the nails on the side of the foot that is away from the other foot, and only with one or two nails on the side *next* the other foot.

CHAPTER XI.

FEEDING.

An important element in the care of a horse is the quantity and description of food that he gets. It is difficult to lay down any precise rules on this head, there are so many different circumstances to take into account. As a rule the better you feed a horse the better he will look, but the more work he must have, *if he has any at all*. By this I mean that a horse will bear a good deal of feeding, if he is in a box and does no work at all; but if he has any work at all, the more corn he gets the more work he ought to have, or he will both become lame and be unsafe to ride. If a horse has regular work, and has to miss a day's work, or two or three days, his corn should be reduced in quantity while he remains off work, and put on again when he begins work again. Four quarterns, or one peck of corn, with a handful of bran in each quartern, and one stone of hay, is an allowance for a full-sized, full-grown horse for twenty-four hours. When a horse is turned six

years old a handful of beans or peas may be added to each feed. A horse will do with a mash made of bran and hot water once or twice a week, and after a day's hunting, half a pailful of gruel made of oatmeal and hot water is generally the first food given them on reaching home.

Hay is generally given to horses twice a day, morning and night, but it is better to divide it into three, and give them some in the middle of the day as well. But the times of giving hay in the daytime must depend upon the hours of work; that is, they should not have hay just before they are wanted to go out, as eating their hay will prevent them from doing their work so easily, and doing their work will hinder them from digesting their hay. Whatever corn and hay the owner allows, some grooms will have their horses always looking better than others will; and if the horse gets a fair allowance of food and does not look well, you may conclude that it is the fault of the man who has him to attend do, and that it is no use giving him more food to make him look better.

Hunters being only required for the winter months, there are several weeks in the summer when the horse is, as a rule, doing nothing, and there are several ways of treating him during this interval, each of which has its advocates.

I will enumerate them.

First, keeping the horse in exactly the same

manner as you do in winter, that is, keeping him up in the stable, giving him hay and corn, or, as it is called, 'dry meat,' and giving him some work, or rather exercise, every day; in fact, with the exception of there being no hunting days, making the horse's treatment the same all the year round.

Mr. Apperly, who wrote under the name of 'Nimrod' about thirty years ago, and who perhaps combined a capacity for riding with a capacity for authorship, in a greater degree than most people, advocated this method, with an occasional dose of physic, and extolled its merits very highly. There is no doubt that if you never let a horse go *out* of condition he will always be *in* condition; and if the horse is wanted for any useful work this plan is right enough; but if it is only adopted for the sake of keeping the horse in condition and nothing else, I should say that it is not the most desirable plan.

The expense is very much greater, the wear and tear of the horse's limbs and system are greater, though to what extent it is difficult to say, and the advantages are not greater than can be obtained in another manner.

Another method is to turn the horse out in a grass field and leave it to take care of itself. This is a bad plan. If the pasture is a rich one the horse will get too fat, and if it is a bare one it will get too thin, and either way it will lose the firmness of flesh it has to start with, owing to its losing the most nutri-

tious part of its food, namely, the corn. The advantage to be derived from this mode of *summering* a horse is that it is always walking about, and its legs therefore are kept in good order, and also that it costs the least of any plan.

A third plan is to keep the horse in a box with a yard to it during the summer, and feed it with grass or other green food, and also with corn, but to give it no exercise at all.

This is also a bad plan if it is continued through the summer. The horse gets full of humours, and from want of use its legs get soft and will not stand the work required of them so well. If, however, it is only continued for a short time after the season is over, during the first part of the summer, it is not objectionable.

The fourth plan, and the one which I should prefer to any of the others, is to turn the horse out in a field with a box to run into, and give him a quartern of corn twice or three times a day. The pasture should not be too rich, or the horse will get too fat; and the horse should not be turned out at a time, or in a place, where he will be annoyed with flies. Or the horse may be kept in a box and supplied with cut grass and corn, and turned out some hours every day. By this means he will keep in nearly as good condition as if he were worked, and will derive all the advantage conferred by rest.

It is generally the custom to give horses physic

when preparing them for the season's hunting, but I do not believe either in the necessity or even the benefit of this proceeding. If the horse is perfectly well it is superfluous, and if he is not perfectly well it is tacit evidence that he has not been treated in the best manner during summer or after he comes up. It is often, I daresay, found, that a horse's legs will swell if he does not get a dose of physic, and that if he then gets one his legs will become fine again. But his legs only swell because he has been improperly treated, and giving him physic is only treating him improperly a second time to counteract the effects of the first improper treatment. If a horse is amiss he will no doubt require medicine; but the best rule, where it is practicable, *is*, not to give him any medicine when there is not anything the matter with him, and to send for a veterinary surgeon when there *is* anything the matter with him.

A horse after being summered and then brought up to get ready for hunting, falls amiss from one or more, of three things: too sudden or too great a change in food, ditto in work or exercise, ditto in temperature of stable or the atmosphere he breathes.

Now, the first can be avoided by changing his food by degrees, either giving him hay before he has come up into the stable or continuing giving him grass after he is brought up. Corn I am supposing he has all the year round. Too great a change in work will not arise if he has been accustomed to run

out, and too great a change in the temperature of the stable can be avoided by keeping the stable windows open and keeping the stable at the same temperature as the box he has been in the habit of living in. If these precautions are properly taken, the horse should not either require physic or suffer from swelled legs.

CHAPTER XII.

BRIDLING.

After shoeing and feeding, saddling and bridling your horse have to be considered. I will endeavour to give my readers a clear idea under this heading, what sort of bridles to use, and how they ought to be made; what sort of saddles to use, and why I consider them preferable to the ordinary saddles in points where they differ from them.

To begin with, there are four sorts of bridles in ordinary use—first, a plain snaffle; second, a plain or, as it is generally called, a single curb; third, a double-reined bridle, formed of a snaffle and curb combined; and fourth, a Pelham, which consists of a curb and snaffle in one piece, forming a double-reined bridle, with two sets of reins and one bit.

There are numerous ways of making, and patterns, and modifications, of each of these bridles, but they all come under one of the four headings I have given. Of these four the double-reined bridle is the most

useful, the safest, and the most generally used; and the Pelham is the most useless, to my thinking.

The double-reined bridle is composed of headstall, reins, and two bits, a snaffle and curb, the curb being the same as a single curb, and the snaffle the same as a plain snaffle, with the exception of not having bars of steel, called cheeks, attached to the rings to which the leather part of the bridle is buckled. They are both made of a great variety of patterns and sizes, but the plainest patterns are the best, and the sizes will depend on the horse they are intended for.

Fig. 7.

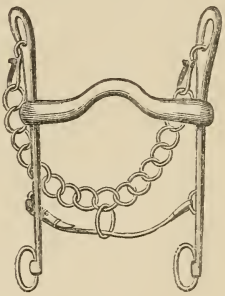
Snaffles only differ in size and in being made either plain or twisted, of which the plain is the best. (Fig. 7.)

Curb bits, as sold, are made in sizes; that is, the larger the size the more severe the bit is as a rule. This is a great mistake on the part of the makers, for the width and size of the bit must be regulated by the size of a horse's head and the width of his mouth; and severity of the bit should be regulated acccording to how hard the horse pulls, without any reference whatever to the size of his head.

Thus, if a man has a pony with a hard mouth, and a large horse with a tender mouth, he will find himself obliged either to put into the pony's mouth a light bit, with which he cannot hold him, or a big bit, twice the width it ought to be; while with the tender-mouthed horse he will have the choice between a little pony's bit, which will not go into his mouth, or a bit that fits him, but is too severe for him.

The size of a curb bit depends on the size of the

Fig. 8.



crossbar or port, as it is called; while the severity of the bit depends on the length of the upright bars or cheeks. The longer the long part of the cheek is the more severe the bit is. The crossbar or port should be quite plain and smooth, with the exception of a slight curve, and the severity of the bit should be increased by lengthening the cheek *alone*, and not by altering the shape or size of the port. The best way to get a good curb bit is to order one to be made for you at a saddler's, giving him the width of the

bit that you want and the length of the cheeks. In bridles, as in many other things, all fancy patterns should be avoided, and the plainest only selected. (Figs. 8, 9, 10.)

Besides the two descriptions of snaffles mentioned above there are two more : the chain snaffle, in which there is a chain similar to a curb-chain in the horse's mouth, instead of two bars of steel; and a gag snaffle, in which the rein runs through the snaffle-ring, instead of being sewn or buckled to it.

Fig. 9.

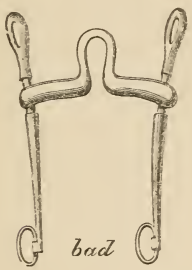
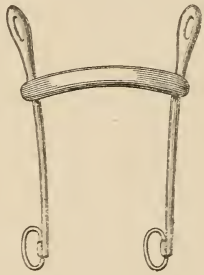


Fig. 10.



Taking, then, an ordinary double-rein bridle for general use, we will examine it as it is generally made.

The headstall and reins are either sewn on the bits or buckled on. One is called a plain bridle and the other a buckled bridle. There is no great merit in either over the other.

The headstalls or that part of the bridle which goes on the horse's head, are generally made right, but I cannot say the same for the reins.

In every double bridle sold there are two faults in the reins. First, they are too long for anything but a horse with an exceptionally long neck; and secondly, the snaffle and curb rein are of different widths.

The objection to the first fault is, that the ends of the reins hang down over the pommel of the saddle, and get between the rider's knee and the saddle, or else between the saddle and the horse's shoulders, one causing discomfort to the rider and the other to the horse.

The objection to the second fault is, that the broad or snaffle rein prevents the rider's hand from closing round and getting a firm grip of, the narrow or curb rein, and consequently the horse is always drawing the curb rein through the rider's fingers and preventing him from holding it tight when he wants to do so.

Many of my readers who are in the habit of hunting will know that this is often the case when they are galloping over a field, although they perhaps did not know the reason; and if any one of them has got two double-reined bridles and will put the two snaffle reins on one pair of bits, and the two curb reins on the other pair, leaving the headstalls as they are, he will be surprised to find with how much more ease he will be enabled to hold the reins with a tight grasp.

I have often asked both saddlers who make

bridles and men who use them, why they have them made in this way, and have received the following two explanations: one, that the snaffle rein requires to be made strong for fear it should break; and the other, that having the reins of different sizes enables the rider to distinguish which rein he has got hold of.

The first reason will not hold water. Anyone who has ridden a horse in fair condition out hunting will know that for the first few minutes after a fox goes away he will often be pulling quite as hard at the curb as at the snaffle; besides which both reins might be made as thick as the snaffle rein, which disposes of that difficulty.

To the second reason—namely, that the rider is better enabled to distinguish between the reins—I would answer that if a man cannot find out which rein he has got hold of without having them made of different sizes he had better stop at home; and if a horse's mouth is so dead that he does not show which rein you are pulling at, there is no necessity for knowing at all, as one rein is as good as another to pull at.

In addition to the bridles themselves, there are two or three appliances connected with them which are required principally with young horses, or to cure horses of particular faulty habits.

First, there is a noseband, which is a strap just above the curb-bit, fastened to the bridle, and

buckling round the horse's nose. The only effect of this when used by itself is to prevent the horse from opening his mouth, but it is generally used in connection with another strap which passes between the horse's fore legs and ends in a loop, through which the girths are passed. The object of this strap and the noseband combined is to prevent the horse from putting up his nose too high or throwing his head up and down. It is then called a cavesson. A cavesson is sometimes formed by attaching the strap to the bit instead of the noseband, but this I do not consider a good plan. The simplest and best form of cavesson, in my opinion, is to have a short piece of strap with one end looped on to the noseband, and the other end buckled to the ring of the ordinary breastplate, which I shall describe presently. By adopting this plan nothing is required except one short strap, if you have a bridle with a noseband, and a breastplate, which is a thing that is almost always required in a stable; and the cavesson is easily let out or taken up.

Besides the cavesson there is the martingale, which is much more commonly used. This consists simply of two narrow short straps with a ring sewn to one end of each strap, and the other ends joined together and forming a broader one, on which is sewn a buckle, so that the end of the broad strap will pass through any thing and then fasten to the buckle. (Fig. 15.)

The buckle end is fastened to the ring of the breastplate, and one pair of reins is passed through the rings. The object of the martingale also, is to keep a horse from throwing up his head, but it gives more play than a cavesson, and enables the rider to regulate the pressure.

The martingale is generally placed on the snaffle rein, but this I consider a mistake; and here I am upheld by the opinion of two people who ought to know. Both 'Nimrod,' and Dick Christian, who was a noted roughrider in Leicestershire for many years, advocate the system of having the martingale on the curb.

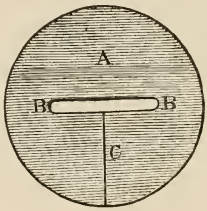
When you are riding with a double bridle you ought principally to use the snaffle, and having the martingale on the curb rein leaves the snaffle rein free; and the curb not being so much required, the martingale is not felt unless the horse puts his head up, which is the time when it ought to be felt.

Many people dislike martingales very much, but there is no great objection to them, and it may be laid down as a maxim that when you have a martingale on you are master of your horse, but when you have not one he is master of you.

For this reason you should always ride a young horse in one, and also a strange horse; and you may lay down as a good rule that you ought always to ride a horse with a martingale, *till you know he will go properly without one.*

In riding with a martingale, if the reins are sewn on to the bit, the ends in the hand must be made to buckle, or you cannot get the martingale on. If the reins are buckled on to the bit then there will have to be something on the reins between the martingale rings and the buckles, otherwise the buckles will get caught in the rings and the horse will get his head fast. These are called stops, and are often sewn on to the rein. But the better way is to cut out two pieces of stiff leather about the size and shape of a crown-piece (see fig. 11), and cut a hole, B B, through

Fig. 11.



each of them, which will admit the rein, and then cut one half of them, C, through at right angles to the hole for the reins; these can be slipped on to any reins after the martingale is put on, and will do for any bridle. They must be stiff, or they might come off in riding. It is better to use them, both for sewn and buckled reins.

Instead of a martingale use is sometimes made of a simple ring, which the reins are passed through before putting them over the horse's neck. This is

to confine the reins and prevent the horse from throwing them over his head when tossing it up and down. It will not do instead of a martingale, but it is better than nothing.

It sometimes may happen that a rider may find himself on a horse that is unmanageable without a martingale, but has not got one on. In this case, if the horse has a breastplate on, the rider should dismount, unbuckle one rein, pass the reins through the ring of the breastplate, and then fasten them again.

It will not be safe to do this out hunting, or if you are going to jump, but on a road it is an effectual substitute for a martingale.

A substitute for a ring may be made in a moment by turning the horse's reins over his head and then twisting them once round and turning them back again. It will then be impossible for the horse to throw the reins over his head.

CHAPTER XIII.

SADDLING.

We now come to the question of the way the horse ought to be saddled. The art of making saddles has progressed considerably during this century, the tendency being to make the saddles plainer, lighter, and simpler; but there is no reason for supposing that the art of making them has arrived at perfection even at the present time, or that saddles are not capable of being improved upon. I will begin by describing the different parts of an ordinary hunting saddle, and then show how I think they can be improved.

The saddle consists of the pommel, which is over the horse's withers; the seat, where the rider sits; the cantle, which is the hindermost part of the saddle; the flaps, which cover the sides of the horse; the spring bars, to which the stirrup leathers are affixed; the girth straps under the flaps, to which the girths are buckled; and the underneath flaps, which go between the girth straps and the horse.

In old saddles at the beginning of the century the pommel and the cantle both rose a great height above the middle or seat of the saddle. This way of making them was gradually modified, until the outline of the top of the saddle was considerably flatter. But even now the front and back of the saddle rise some inches above the middle, a plan which might, I think, be altered for the better by making them very much flatter than they now are.

When the horses which were ridden hunting were short, cobby, and for the most part hollow-backed horses, the saddles, no doubt, were made to fit them; but with the long, straight-backed, nearly thoroughbred horses which are now used for following the hounds, the shape of the saddles used should have altered accordingly, and the old shapes are obsolete.

The pommel of a saddle is made in one of three ways: it is either an ordinary pommel, a half-cut back pommel, or a whole-cut back pommel.

A half-cut pommel looks as if half the pommel had been cut off; and the whole-cut pommel looks as if the whole of the pommel had been cut off.

The half-cut pommels are common, but the whole-cut pommels are seldom met with. They are much the best of the three, that is, they combine the most advantages. They will fit any horse without hurting his withers, because the part of the tree which generally comes down on the withers, in these

saddles falls across the broad part of the back, and not across the withers at all.

Again, a rider often gets thrown, or is liable to get thrown, on to the pommel of his saddle, and with an ordinary saddle runs a much greater risk of being hurt and injured than he does with a cut pommelled saddle.

You are thus saved as well from one risk of being hurt as from one of the most troublesome and vexatious evils attending horses and riding, that is, a sore back. A horse that is ridden with a cut-back saddle will not get sore withers, and a horse that has got sore withers from being ridden with an ordinary saddle can be ridden without making him any worse, in a cut-back saddle. In addition to the pommel being too high the cantle or back of the saddle is generally made much too high. If you put an ordinary saddle on a straight-backed horse the saddle will only rest on the parts under the pommel and middle, and the hinder part will be raised above the horse's back, so that when the rider moves backwards and forwards on the saddle it will go up and down on the horse's back something like the motion of a boat at sea; whereas the cantle ought to be flat, and the saddle ought to press on the horse's back from end to end, and then the weight will be distributed over a large surface, instead of being all concentrated in one place; and the horse would carry his load easier, and be less likely to get a sore back.

I have given a drawing of an ordinary hunting saddle, A (fig. 12), and by the side of it a saddle shaped in the manner I have described, B.

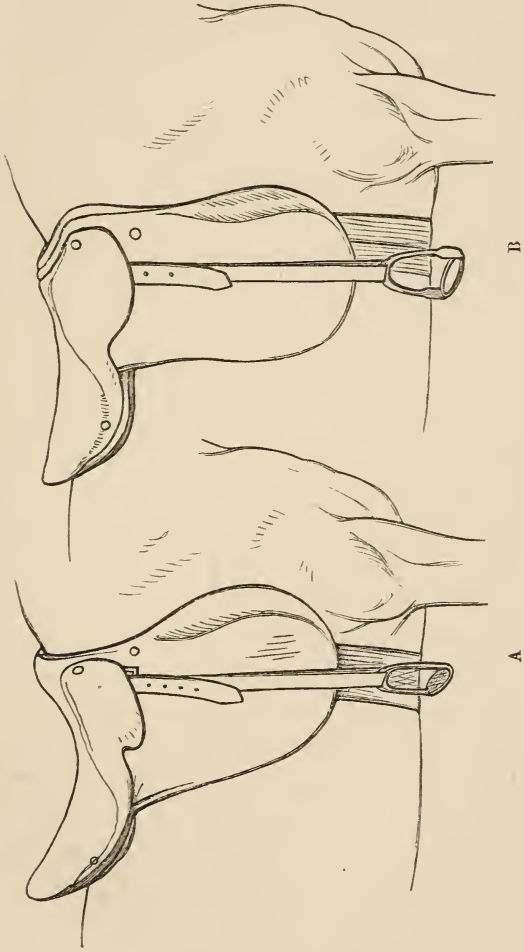


Fig. 12.

There are two flaps visible on each side of a saddle—one a small one, near the top, called a skirt, and which is meant to cover the bars on which the stirrup leathers are hung; and the larger and lower flap, to cover the straps to which the girths are buckled. Under the small skirt flaps are two nearly horizontal steel bars, with one end turning up or lying down by means of a hinge. These are called spring bars, and the stirrup leathers are slid on to them, and then the hinged part of the bar is turned up or left down as the rider wishes. When turned up the bars are said to be shut, and when laid down they are said to be open. These bars call for no particular remark, except that it is much safer always to ride with the bars down or open, as there is then a much greater probability of the leathers coming out in the event of a rider getting a fall and his feet being entangled in the stirrups or leathers. As the whole object and intention of having these bars is to ensure the rider not being dragged by the stirrups in the case of a fall, they are best used in such a manner as will most nearly ensure that object being attained, and this is best done by riding with them always open.

Under the larger flaps are the straps to which the girths are fastened. These are generally three in number, and for at least fifty per cent. of the horses ridden they are in the wrong place. When a horse is saddled, whether it is girthed tightly or loosely,

the girths on that particular horse will get to, and stop in, one particular place, wherever you may put them to start with. Now, the girths ought to be so adjusted to the saddle that when the girths have got into this place the saddle is in the position you want it to be.

But in very many horses, when the girths are in the place they always get into, the saddle is too forward, or, to put it in another way, there is too much of the saddle in front of the girths, and too little behind them. The way to remedy this is to bring the girth nearer to the front of the saddle, and this is done by altering the girth straps. If the strap that lies the furthest back is taken away, and a similar strap nailed on to the tree of the saddle in front of the other two straps, and if the girths are then attached to the two forwardest straps, the forwardest girth being drawn the tightest, then the saddle will be in the proper position on the horse's back.

The stirrup leathers should, for hunting, or indeed for any riding, always be of the best leather and workmanship you can get; that is, whatever saddler you buy them of, it is always prudent to buy the best and most expensive he has got, as your safety in a great measure depends on their being good. It is also a good plan to commence each hunting season with new stirrup leathers, and thus never use one pair for more than one season for hunting.

The stirrup leathers usually sold are right, with two exceptions: one is, that the holes are always punched from the wrong side; and the other, that the holes are always too far apart.

The holes should be punched from the same side as the tongue of the buckle goes in at, and there should be only half an inch between the holes. The reason of this is as follows:—

Everyone ought to be able to alter their stirrup leathers—that is, to make them longer or shorter—themselves, without getting off and without stopping their horse. Now, in order to do this with as much ease as possible, everything about the stirrups and leathers should work as smoothly and as well as it can be made to do. If the holes are punched as I have directed the largest opening will be next the tongue of the buckle, and the tongue will slip in with ease; whereas, when the holes are punched the other way, the smaller opening is next the tongue, and force is required to get it buckled, which force the rider is not able to apply when seated on the saddle. The holes should be half an inch apart, that is, they should have half an inch of leather between them, because the rider can easily, with one hand and one motion of the forefinger, raise the strap that distance and put the tongue of the buckle in the hole, but he cannot do this if the holes are an inch apart, or nearly so. When you want to let down your stirrups you should draw the strap through the buckle

till the tongue is out of the hole, and then, by pressing on the stirrup with your foot, you should lengthen the leather till it is past the hole you wish it to be at, and then draw it back again to the required hole.

Everyone should accustom themselves to take up and let down their stirrups *easily* with one hand, while the horse is going on, and should know when their stirrups are the right length by the feel of them, without having to count the holes. If you cannot find out whether the stirrups are the same length without looking to see, it will not much matter whether they are the same length or not. A rider should also accustom himself to ride with two or three different lengths, so that if he gets into a fresh saddle he should not feel helpless if the stirrups happen to be an inch or two longer or shorter than he wants them to be.

I have dwelt somewhat minutely on this point of adjusting the stirrup leathers, both because the comfort and often the safety of the rider are in a measure dependent on it, and also because, as far as my own observation has gone, men who are otherwise fairly good riders often seem bewildered and helpless when they have occasion to do anything to their stirrup leathers.

What can look more awkward than to see a man sitting nearly sideways on his saddle, with his whip in his mouth and one foot out of the stirrup, with

both hands at the stirrup leather, counting to see if he has got them the same length, while his horse is dancing about with impatience, and losing his temper during the process? But this seems to be the usual method of proceeding.

While on the subject of saddles I may say that anyone who wishes to get a saddle such as I have described and drawn, may have some difficulty in doing so, as they are not generally made, but he can obtain them of Messrs. Urch, in Long Acre, London, by asking for a cut pommel saddle.

To proceed. Saddles are made either with the flaps stuffed or padded in front of the stirrup leather or else made of plain leather. The plain leather flaps have no advantage over the stuffed ones, except that they are said to last longer; while the stuffed flaps are more comfortable and more easy to ride in—that is, anyone who can ride in a plain flapped saddle can ride in a stuffed one; but it does not at all follow that because you can ride in a stuffed saddle you can therefore ride in a plain one.

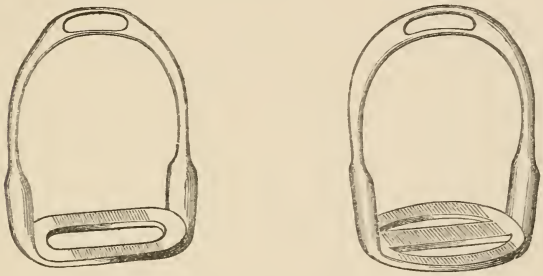
I should, therefore, always buy a saddle with stuffing in the flaps.

We now come to the stirrups. Here again there are several patterns, the greater part of them faulty. The great things to pay attention to are, first, that they should be the right size, not very large nor too tight; second, that the sides should be broad and flat for a couple of inches from the sole upwards;

and third, that the sole should be moderately broad, but not too broad. The sole is sometimes made of one bar, sometimes of two, and sometimes of three. Of these two is the best; three are too broad and too apt to hold your feet fast, and one bar does not afford such a pleasant bearing for the foot (fig. 13).

If the sides of the stirrup are round they will hurt the rider's foot in a long day, and should therefore

Fig. 13.



be avoided. The soles of the stirrups are roughened, and should be re-done as often as they get worn smooth.

The spring bars should be as near the front of the saddle as possible, but they are often placed too far back, and give the rider the feeling of riding on a shorter saddle than it really is, and also prevent his getting a good grip of the stuffed part, and cause him to roll about on his saddle.

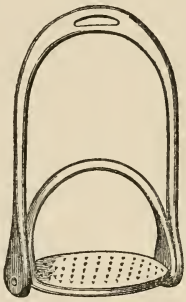
LADIES' SADDLES.

Although I do not profess to write anything on

the subject of ladies' riding, &c., I will here mention that the best, and indeed the *only* safe, ladies' stirrup, in my opinion, that I have seen, is the one called Latchford's patent ladies' stirrup, and consists of a very small stirrup inside a very large one. In the event of a fall the smaller stirrup becomes disengaged from the larger one and sets the rider's foot at liberty (fig. 14).

The stirrup-leather should pass over the stirrup-

Fig. 14.



bar, then through a hole in the saddle-flap, under the horse's body, and be buckled to a tongue on the off side of the saddle. By this means every time the rider rises on her stirrup the pressure is divided between the near and off side of the saddle, and tends to prevent the saddle from either turning or giving the horse a sore back. Care, however, must be taken to remove the metal roller that is generally placed on the stirrup-bar attached to the saddle; if you do not do this the stirrup-leather will be cut in

two in a short time, and endanger the rider. I was once told by a livery-stable keeper that he did not use saddles with stirrups made in this manner simply because he found that the stirrup-leather used to get cut in two, and yet he never took the trouble to ascertain the cause of this and remove it.

I have given a drawing of what I consider the best form of men's stirrup, and of one with three bars, to show the difference, and also a drawing of Latchford's ladies' stirrup.

BREASTPLATE.

There are one or two adjuncts to the saddle which are not part of the saddle, and can be used or not, as the rider finds it necessary or convenient.

The first I shall mention only to reject it, and that is the crupper. Any horse requiring a crupper should not be used for riding. The second is the breastplate, which should always be used for hunting, and might as well always be used for riding, as there would then be less likelihood of its being forgotten some time when it was required.

The breastplate is made of leather, and consists of a strap passing between the horse's fore legs and looping round the girths, the loop being made to take up or let out by means of a buckle and some holes in the strap; the other end terminates in a ring at the horse's chest; from this ring a leather loop goes round the horse's neck, and from this loop

two narrow straps go, one on each side of the horse's withers, to fasten the breastplate to the saddle near the pommel. These narrow straps are attached to the rest of the breastplate by two rings, one on each

Fig. 15.

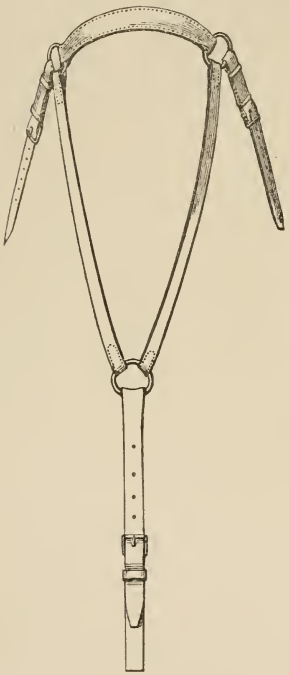
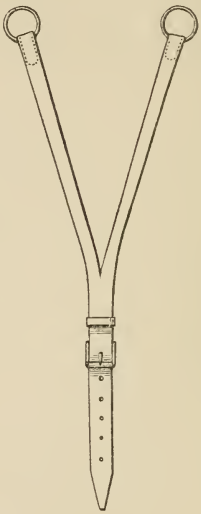


Fig. 16.



side of the horse's neck. Care should be taken that the ring on the horse's chest does not press on his windpipe and obstruct his breathing. The martingale, as I have said before, is a short strap buckling

on to the lower ring of the breastplate, and ending in two narrow straps with a ring at the end of each, through which one of the bridle-reins passes. I have given a drawing of a breastplate and martingale (figs. 15 and 16).

CHAPTER XIV.

VALUE.

ANYONE who is obliged to buy, or wishes to buy a horse should acquire some notion both as to the value of different horses and also as to the price. I have made a distinction between value and price, for this reason, that although a horse's price is supposed to, and often does, depend on his value, still there are many instances when this is not the case. Thus of two horses sold at the same price one is often really much more valuable than the other. Some horses, again, are really of no value at all, and others are of very much greater value than either what they are sold at, or what you could sell them for.

Anyone buying a horse, therefore, ought to consider two things: first, what value the horse is likely to have to *him*; and secondly, what price he is likely to be worth if he wishes to sell him again. It often happens that when a man has bought a horse which suits him, he would not, after having had it a short time, be willing to sell it for twice what he

gave for it; while at the same time if he did want to sell it he could not obtain anything like twice the sum he gave for it. In this case the horse's value is much in excess of his market price; while, on the other hand, there are many worthless horses which are sold over and over again at very much above their real value. As a general rule a horse's price is somewhere between what you have to give for him and what you can sell him for.

While a horse's value depends on how far he suits the owner's purpose, and whether he is intrinsically a good one or not, as a rule the better a horse is, the greater will be his value in proportion to what you pay for him; and the worse the horse is the greater his price will be in proportion to his value; or, to put it more concisely, the better a horse is the cheaper he will be sold, and the worse a horse is the dearer he will be sold in proportion to what they each *ought* to fetch. I will, however, discard the market value or price of the horse, and give my readers a few ideas to enable them to judge of the real or intrinsic value of a horse, for this reason, that I am supposing they are desirous of buying a horse to keep and use, and not desirous of selling one; and therefore they ought to consider what it is worth their while to give for a horse, and not how much they can get for it.

A horse's value depends on three things: size, strength, and beauty; and there are three more things

which have an element in determining their value: colour, action, and temper. I need not observe that a horse's value depends in a great measure on his symmetry; but, beyond saying that a symmetrical horse is always more valuable than an unsymmetrical horse, I need not take it into account.

Taking, therefore, these three qualities, size, strength, and beauty, the most valuable horse is one which possesses all three, and the least valuable is one which does not possess any of the three. Of horses which only possess two of these qualities I should place one having size and strength first, strength and beauty second, and size and beauty third.

Of those only having one of these qualities I should place strength first, beauty second, size third. I give here an instance of each:—

Size, strength, and beauty.	Large, good-looking hunter or carriage horse.
Size and strength . .	Ditto, without good looks.
Strength and beauty . .	Handsome weight-carrying cob.
Size and beauty . .	Light weight hunter or harness horse.
Strength	Ordinary-looking weight-carrying cob.
Beauty	Good-looking light weight hack.
Size	Cab.

As regards the other three qualities, colour, action, and temper, they may be summed up by saying that colour is very much a matter of taste, a horse with good action is always more valuable than a horse with bad action, and a horse with a good temper

is always more valuable than a horse with a bad temper.

It will be seen that I have not mentioned breeding as an element of value. This is because I consider breeding should be taken into account more in considering what purpose you want your horse for, than in estimating his value. As a rule the better bred a horse is, other things being equal, the *more* valuable an animal he is, supposing he is a good animal; while the nearer thoroughbred he is the *less* he is worth, other things being equal, supposing he is a bad animal.

Thus a *good* thoroughbred horse is the most valuable of any horse, but a bad cart-horse is more valuable and more saleable than a bad thoroughbred horse.

CHAPTER XV.

COLOUR.

Although I have stated that colour is chiefly a matter of taste, yet there are generally to be found certain qualities attached to certain colours, which it would be as well to mention.

As a rule, rich good shades of any colour are both better animals and more saleable than bad shades of the same colour. Thus, though it is very much a matter of taste whether a chestnut or a bay is preferred, and one has no intrinsic merit over the other, yet a good bay or chestnut is both better and worth more, than a bad shade of either of those two colours. It would also I think be found, that while colour was no indication of blood, that shade would be found to *be* an indication of it, and that the better bred a horse was, the more likely he would be, to be of a rich good shade of whatever colour he was. Thus, if you took any number, say a hundred, of racehorses, and a like number selected at random of horses of no breeding, it would be found that while there was

just as much diversity of colour in the racehorses as in the others, yet the quality of the colours would be very much the best in the better bred animals.

I will enumerate the principal colours:—

Black.	Grey-roan.
Black-brown.	Dark chestnut.
Black-chestnut.	Red chestnut.
Brown.	Light chestnut.
Bay-brown.	Piebald.
Bay.	Skewbald.
Yellow-bay.	Spotted.
Dun.	Cream-colour, black points.
Mouse-colour.	Cream-colour, white points.
Black-roan.	Iron-grey.
Bay-roan.	Dapple grey.
Strawberry.	White.
Chestnut-roan.	

It will thus be seen that there are twenty-five distinct colours, most of which can be counted over again by being found mixed with white faces and legs. It will be found, however, that all are either shades or mixtures of six primary colours: black, brown, bay, dun, chestnut, and white.

It would be useless and impracticable to try to assign different qualities to each of these colours, although it is quite possible that there are peculiarities of disposition attached to nearly every one of them. I will, however, point out a few peculiarities which have come under my notice as generally allied to different colours.

To begin with. Although black horses are to be found in every breed, yet this colour is most common

in cart-horses, and most rare in thoroughbred horses.

Black-brown, on the contrary, is more common in thoroughbred horses than in any other breed; and I do not ever remember having seen it except when allied to a certain amount of blood.

Chestnut is as common among racehorses as any other colour, while it is less common in every other breed, with the exception of one breed of cart-horses, called the Suffolk Punch, which are never of any other colour when pure bred.

The greatest number of greys are to be found, I think, in middle bred horses, that is, there are less grey racehorses and cart-horses, than there are among the intermediate sorts.

Piebald and skewbald are most common among the smallest horses, that is, there are many more under-sized animals and ponies of these colours than there are full-sized ones; while bay is much the most numerous colour, *taking all breeds of horses lumped together.* To sum up.

Black . . .	is most seen in	cart-horses.
Black-brown . .	„ „	racehorses.
Bay and bay-brown .	„ „	all breeds together.
Chestnut . . .	„ „	racehorses and cart-horses.
Grey	„ „	horses that are neither of those two.
Piebald and skewbald	„ „	Ponies.

As regards the qualities attached to different colours, I should say, speaking of three parts bred

horses or hunters, that dark-coloured horses are the soberest and the boldest, and are the most easily taught to jump brooks and drains. Bay horses and chestnut horses are hotter and more fidgetty; light bay and light chestnut being the most so.

But there is a difference between bay horses and chestnut horses. Chestnut horses are fidgetty and hot, but seem to have less sense than bay horses, while bay horses, though they are cleverer, are the worst tempered and the most irritable—that is, browns are the soberest, bays are the worst tempered, and chestnuts are the most foolish. When you get to other colours, they are not so common, and therefore it is more difficult to classify them. I have mentioned one colour which will probably not be familiar to many of my readers, and that is, a black-chestnut. It is a rare colour, and is often mistaken for a real black when it is seen, but if a black horse is clipped he will come out a disagreeable sort of dun, while a black-chestnut will clip the same colour he was before. The best place to look to tell the colour, is the nose and roots of the ears. I bought a pony of this colour, and three different people each said it was a different colour on the same day.

Dun is not a common colour, and is a bad colour. It is more the colour of a donkey than anything else.

It may seem as if I had mentioned more roans than there really are, but each of them is a distinct colour.

Black and bay-roans mean roan horses with black or bay heads and legs. Strawberry is the same colour all over the horse, and is a light bay roan without bay or black points. Chestnut-roan is like a strawberry, but with chestnut mixed with white instead of bay mixed with white; and a grey-roan is a grey horse with a little colour mixed with it.

CHAPTER XVI.

DIFFERENT BREEDS.

THERE are in England several distinct breeds varying from each other, but there are not nearly so many as a casual observer would imagine. What is called a hack is not a distinct breed, but only consists of an undersized specimen of other breeds, and hunters are not a distinct breed.

The first and most strongly marked distinct breed is, I need not say, the thoroughbred horse. This breed is descended from both Asiatic and African ancestors—the Arab and the Barb. They were at first crossed with English mares, and have gradually, by careful selection, become a breed of themselves, in no way resembling either the Arab or the old English ancestors, though they still resemble the Barb. Thoroughbred horses in England are almost invariably bred solely for racing purposes, although they are often used for other purposes after they grow up. The consequence of this is, that the breed has gradually assumed the shape and pro-

portions best suited to the work for which it is intended, that is, to carry very light weights at a very high rate of speed. The result of this is, that most thoroughbred horses, if they are of no use for racing, are prevented by their shape from being so much use for other purposes as they might be, and as horses that are not thoroughbred *are*. This, however, is not the fault of the breed, but the fault of the people who have bred them. If the same care had been taken to produce thoroughbred horses adapted for other purposes, for instance to carry fifteen stone with hounds, or to win trotting matches, it is highly probable that very perfect specimens of animals of that class would have been produced, with all the good qualities of the present thoroughbred.

The next distinct breed to the racehorse is that of carriage horses, which are larger and stronger than the racehorse, but cannot compete successfully with them at any single pace, or for any single purpose, with the exception of when their superior size enables them to pull a heavier load on a road.

Most of the more valuable carriage-horses are now produced from the racehorse and the carriage mare, but for all that there is a distinct race of coach and carriage horses.

The next distinct breed is the roadster, trotter, or cob, used for riding on the road or going in harness. The fourth distinct breed is the cart-horse. Of this

there are several distinct breeds, but they are all one race and used for the same purpose. In addition to these, ponies are a distinct breed, although they are of all sizes.

The greater number of horses, however, that we see in general use, are the product of two animals not of the same breed. Hunters, for instance, are generally the product of a thoroughbred sire, and a mare with more or less blood, but not thoroughbred. I shall, however, speak on this subject at greater length in the section I have devoted to the breeding of horses, and will therefore not enlarge here on the subject of cross-bred horses.

CHAPTER XVII.

RIDING ACROSS COUNTRY.

My object in writing this chapter is not so much to teach people to ride across country, as to enable them, when they do know how, to ride better.

Many of my readers no doubt will think that they already know all that is necessary, and that there is nothing more for them to learn. This will no doubt be true in some few instances, but really good horsemen are not so numerous as would be imagined, and many who now ride well, could ride a great deal better than they do, but do not do so, partly from want of thinking about the matter at all, and partly because they do not know what capacity for improvement there is in them.

It is difficult to define or classify a good rider, but in order to give my readers an idea of what I mean, I will divide riding men who *can* ride into two classes, good riders and good horsemen.

A man may think, and think with truth, that he is a good rider, but still he may only be an indifferent

horseman. There is the same sort of distinction between a man who can simply ride well and a finished horseman, that there is between a musician and a musical composer. One of them can play almost anything, but requires his music to be given him, while the other creates his own music.

So a good rider can ride a horse when he has got one, while a good horseman can make a good hunter out of a horse that knows nothing about it, and can improve to a considerable degree a horse that has already learnt the rudiments of his trade.

As a rule, what is called a hard rider is not a very good horseman. A horse generally comes out of his hands no better educated than he was when he went into them.

Again, being able to ride anything, which some people think is a test of a good rider, is little or no test of a good horseman. Many men can ride almost any sort of a horse in a certain way, who are utterly unable to teach a horse anything, while some men may be very good horsemen who are neither bold nor forward riders.

As a rule, men who are good riders when they are young become better horsemen as they get older, but not better riders.

If anyone wishes to form an opinion as to how good a rider or horseman he is, let him try the following experiment.

Let him take the handiest horse in his stable, and

take it alone to a moderately sized hedge and ditch. Then let him put half-a-crown between each leg and the saddle, wherever he thinks best, and tie his reins with a bit of packthread to the breastplate, so that they will not fly over the horse's head when he jumps, and then let him see if he can take his horse up to the fence and jump him over it with his hands in his pockets without dropping the half-crowns. If he cannot do this, or if his horse will not allow him to do this, both he and his horse have still something to learn.

My readers must not think that if they cannot do this they are not good riders. Very many good riders could not do it. I only give this as a specimen of what a good horseman can teach himself and his horse to do. If a horse will trot up to a fence with his head perfectly loose, and then jump it and go on without galloping off, he is tolerably perfect, but I do not think there are many horses who will, and this chiefly because they have never been taught to do so.

The first thing after teaching a horse to go properly on a road, that is required to make a hunter of him, is to teach him to jump; and here their education is generally defective. Horses often, after this part of their education is supposed to be completed, behave as follows.

Before getting to a fence they quicken their pace very much, and when within a certain distance they

seem to have made up their mind to go over, and it is difficult to stop them; and when they have jumped the fence successfully, unless they are immediately restrained by the bridle, they go off at top speed. They will also jump better at one time than another, and jump better over one sort of fence than another. If they do not want to jump a fence, they gallop at it just the same, and then stop short and spin round.

Now a horse does none of these things unless he has been taught to do them by *some one*.

If you take a young horse that you can be quite certain has never been jumped over a fence or ridden at one, and canter him slowly right across a field up to a small hedge or a small ditch, he will not quicken his pace on approaching it, but will canter completely up to it. When he gets to it he may jump it or he may stop, but if he stops he will not spin round, but will stand with his head looking over the fence, and if he jumps it he will not quicken his pace on the other side.

Now this is the way a well-broken horse ought to behave when ridden at a fence, with this exception, that whereas an untaught horse will canter up to a fence and then jump it or stop at his own pleasure, a well-broken horse ought to canter up to a fence and then jump it or stop at his *rider's* pleasure.

I have said in treating of riding on a road, that the first essential to riding pleasantly and safely is that you should be able to stop your horse when you

wanted to stop him, and the second requisite, that you should be able to make him go on when you want him to go on.

This is even more applicable in riding across country. You cannot ride with any safety if you cannot stop your horse, and you cannot ride with any pleasure if you cannot make him go on.

What is more unpleasant than to have to stand about fifty yards off a fence, calling out to somebody to tell you what there is on the other side, because you dare not go and see for yourself, for fear your horse should go at it whether you wish or not? And yet there are many horses, and even many good horses, that if you put them at a fence, and suddenly see something which causes you to wish to stop, it is a matter of great difficulty to stop them. Many falls are caused by this, and many more runs are lost, because the rider dare not take his horse exactly where he likes.

Now, as I said before, a horse which has never jumped a fence never rushes at one, and they only rush because they have been taught to do so.

People often ride a young horse at a fence holding him tight by the head for fear he should spin round, and spurring him for fear he should stop, and as often as not striking him just as he is taking off for fear he should not jump high enough.

Now a young horse dislikes all three of these things excessively, and if he has at all a tender mouth

all three of them hurt him in different places at once. No wonder then that he acquires the habit of going as hard as he can pelt at a fence, to get over with as little punishment to himself as possible, and soon acquires the habit of doing this, even when he is neither spurred nor whipped.

CHAPTER XVIII.

LEAPING.

It is a very commonly prevailing idea, and a very erroneous one, that it is a bad thing to let a young horse refuse a fence, and that if you once put him at a fence you ought to make him go over. No idea can be productive of more mischief in teaching a horse than this, and it is the chief cause of a great many horses not being better to ride than they are.

It is quite as much a proper part of a good hunter's education that he should go up to a fence without jumping it, when occasion requires, as that he should jump it. If a horse stops at a fence, unless he is a restive horse, it is because he has some reason for it; either he thinks he cannot jump it or he is afraid to try. In either of these cases, you only make him worse by frightening him still more, which you certainly will do if you make him jump it with whip or spur.

A horse will sometimes stop at a fence the first time, but will jump it if he is ridden at it a second

time; but if he refuses the second time you never ought to ride him at it a third time.

If the fence is too big to be jumped standing, he should be taken away and a smaller fence should be selected, but if it can be jumped standing, the rider should try if the horse will do so, by keeping his head to it and just kicking him gently with his heels, letting him take his own time in looking at it and his own way in getting over it. If he will not jump it after a certain time he should be taken away.

If he jumps it, however awkwardly, he should be allowed to go his own pace half over the next field, and then either pulled up gently or ridden on to the next gate or fence, as the rider wishes. He should not be encouraged or petted as if he had done something wonderful, but it should be taken as a matter of course, and the idea you should try to give the horse is that you wanted to get into the next field, and that in order to do so he had to jump the fence, and that you were going somewhere.

For this reason it is highly wrong to strike your horse *after* he has got over the fence, and it is decidedly foolish to turn him round and make him jump back again. A horse soon learns that you want him to get into the next field, but if you strike him when he has got there, he does not know *what* you want him to *do*, and if you turn him round and jump back he does not know *where* you want him to *go*. A young horse is very soon puzzled, and a puzzled horse is

very soon frightened, and a frightened horse soon loses his head, and then is liable to become dangerous.

If a horse refuses a fence, your object should be to prevent him having the fact impressed on his memory, and if you trot him up to two or three small places and stop him, and then go away without jumping them, he will very soon be unable to distinguish between the times when he stopped to please his rider and the times when he stopped to please himself, and in addition to that he will learn to go close up to a fence, without taking it too much for granted that he is invariably to jump it.

Another very common fault is that people try to teach horses to leap when they are not in a fit state to be taught. A horse should not be taught to leap till he is properly broke to ride.

You can teach them much more and much quicker if you only teach them one thing at a time, than if you try to teach them two things at a time.

For this reason you ought not to teach a young horse to leap till he has become quiet to ride, and you ought not to teach him to follow the hounds till he has learnt to leap.

It is a very common practice to take a half-broken horse out to what is called 'show them the hounds,' and every time this is done you are really trying to teach them three things at once, and they learn to do all three badly.

I once asked a very good rider[1] what was the

[1] Mr. Henry Strickland Constable.

best way to teach a young horse to leap, and was told that the proper way to teach a horse to leap was to ride him along the road; and this I found to be sound advice, for often when a horse refuses a fence, if you were to ride him four or five miles on the road, and then come back and try him again, he would jump it; and the next time you wanted him to jump he would do it much better and quicker than if you had kept him at the place in the first instance and forced him to jump it.

Similarly, the best way to train a horse to follow the hounds is to jump him over fences quietly at home.

A horse that has been taught to leap in this way will be better to *ride* than one which has learnt in the hunting field, for this reason, that he will have acquired the habit of going by himself, and will not hang-to or want to follow other horses; whereas, if he has learnt out hunting, he will always want to go where the rest go, and some day you will get into a lane or road and not be able to get out of it again, and have to go galloping down it for a mile because a lot of other people are doing so, and your horse won't leave them; whereas, if your horse is taught to go by himself, he will jump out just as readily whether the rest do so or not.

Another very bad thing is to check your horse suddenly or stop him when he has jumped a fence, either on landing or immediately after landing.

The first of these, 'checking your horse on land-

ing,' is often done involuntarily, simply because the rider is holding on by the bridle, and the sudden jerk throws his weight on to it.

But the second, which is also wrong, is generally done on purpose.

When a young horse has got over a fence successfully, he will often gallop off out of sheer pleasure and satisfaction at having mastered a difficulty, and if the rider immediately pulls him up and hurts his mouth in so doing, it discomposes and disappoints him. In these cases it is much better to let the horse gallop fifty or a hundred yards, and then stop him quietly, and he will soon cease to want to do so.

All young horses seem to be more frightened of ditches and water than hedges and rails, but they are less likely to fall at the first two than the last two. A horse will often stop at a very small ditch with a little water in it, which would not hesitate at a fence as high as the ditch is broad, although the ditch is much the easiest to jump and involves far the least exertion. A horse should be taught to overcome this fear by walking him through water whenever there are any ponds or shallow brooks, and he should be taught to jump ditches standing, letting him look at them as long as he likes, but not punishing him or hustling him in any way whatever. He should be taken over very small grips at first until he thoroughly understands the proper spring to take, and then the size of the jump should gradually be

increased, but he should never be trotted or cantered up to a ditch until he has been jumped over that identical ditch several times standing. I am of course speaking in this case of a horse's earlier education. The time will come when he will have to jump drains that are too wide to be jumped standing, but all small ditches should be jumped standing first, and then the horse will canter up and go over without fear or hesitation.

If a horse is afraid to go up to a ditch, or shows fear when he is brought to it, it is a clear sign that something has been done at some previous time to frighten him. A horse that has never jumped a ditch, and never been put at one, will (although he may have a decided objection to jumping) evince no objection whatever to going up to it and looking at it, and will stand contemplating it as long as the rider chooses. If, therefore, a horse shows any fear beyond not jumping, it is a sign that he has learnt something wrong, and has got that to unlearn, in addition to what he has got to learn. When a horse does this, the following plan will cure him and give him confidence. You can easily find out what sized grip or ditch he *will* jump, and the best way is to ride him quietly up to one, and when you see he means to jump, stop him and make him look at it, and then take him away. The horse will be slightly vexed at not being allowed to jump it, and when you next give him a chance, will probably jump freely.

If a horse has acquired a habit of going at a ditch as hard as he can pelt, it will be a difficult matter to cure him; the only way is to make him walk up to a ditch several times and then walk along it, instead of jumping it, and then turn his head to it when he is too close to rush at it, and has to jump it standing. This will get him out of it by degrees, if anything will.

Great injury is done to young horses by checking them with the bridle when they alight after a jump. This leads them to associate jumping with pain, and makes them either refuse or go wildly at the leap to get it over as soon as possible. This habit of checking a horse at his leap arises from one of two things; either the rider is afraid the horse will take off with him, and checks him to prevent this happening, or else he cannot sit on the horse when leaping, without holding on by his bridle. In the first case the checking is voluntary, and in the second it is involuntary, and the rider often does not know that he does it. The cure in the first place is to allow the horse to go on at any speed he pleases, and pull him up after he has gone a little way, and the cure for the second is to ride with a breastplate on the horse, and when he jumps, take hold of the breastplate, with the hand that is not holding the reins. The rider will thus be enabled to hold himself on without hurting his horse's mouth and making him go unpleasantly. This is in cases where the rider holds

on by the bridle and knows that he does so, but in many cases, more than I should like to mention, the rider not only does not know that he holds on by the bridle, but would indignantly scout the idea if anyone told him he did.

I had a singular opportunity of noticing this in the Holderness country. The hounds were trying to pick up the scent in a field next the road, and the whole of the riders composing the field were standing with their horses in the road, waiting to see what the hounds did. The fence out of the road was a small level hedge, and a small ditch on the other side of it. As the hounds drew further away from the road, it became necessary to jump the fence, and I sat on my horse and watched nearly seventy men jump the fence, who every one of them were pulled off the saddle on to their horse's shoulder as their horse alighted. The reason of this was very simple, and was as follows.

They all had tight hold of their horse's head as they put him at the fence, and as the horse extended his neck in jumping, he drew them over the saddle pommel by their hands. Yet nearly every one of these seventy would be considered, and justly, as good riders, if they had gone into another country, but the fact was they were not aware they were holding on by the horse's head, and consequently they took no pains to avoid doing it.

If any of my readers thinks he does not hold on

by his horse's head at a jump, and wishes to be sure, let him try the following experiment. Let him punch two little holes in each side of one of his reins near the bit, and three or four inches apart; then let him get two bits of worsted and tie them one to each of the pair of holes, so that the worsted is tighter than the rein, and will break if you pull at the rein.

Now let him trot, not gallop, his horse up to an ordinary fence with only this rein in his hand, and see if he can get over the fence and go fifty yards on the other side without breaking the worsted. I will venture to predict not only that he will break the worsted the first time he tries, but that he will have to try a good many times before he succeeds in performing the test.

The way to avoid doing it is to either ride up to the fence with the reins loose, or to hold them in a grasp that is sufficiently loose to allow the horse to draw them through your fingers with a very slight pressure, taking care, however, that he does not jerk the reins altogether out of your hands.

When a horse jumps a small fence or ditch, he lights on his fore legs and picks them up again before his hind feet come to the ground; but in jumping a larger place he will often alight on all four feet at once, and this is the safest and best way for a horse to come down after a leap. If a horse comes down on his fore feet after a large jump, and

the ground is soft, there is a danger of his not getting his fore feet out of the road of his hind ones, and thus getting a fall. Again, if a horse makes a great spring, or is going fast, there is a possibility of his over-balancing himself. A horse which has his head held when he jumps, is more likely to fall from either of these two causes than when he goes with it loose.

One of the most likely fences to give a horse a fall is an ordinary hedge with a ditch on the other side some little distance from the hedge, that is, with a piece of bank between. The height of the hedge prevents the horse from seeing the ditch, and the ditch is just where he would naturally put his fore feet.

Now in this case, if a horse is ridden fast, and has his head held and comes down on his fore feet first, unless he happens to take such a spring as will clear the whole, he is almost certain to get a fall. But if the horse goes slowly with his head loose he will drop on all fours, and can much more easily put either his fore or hind feet on the bank, and if he *should* happen to come with his fore feet in the ditch he will only come on his stomach, and need not necessarily give his rider a fall even then.

A fence of this sort, with the ditch first, is very much easier to jump, but in this case also, a horse has a better chance of getting over it when going slow with his head loose.

It must be remembered that I am now speaking only of horses leaping in what is called cold blood, when they are neither blown nor tired.

In a run, it will be advisable to collect a horse by supporting his head when he is blown and tired, up to the moment of his taking off, but even then his head should be perfectly at liberty the moment he is in the air. Next to the fence I have described, a post and rail with a wide brook is one of the most difficult to get over, and when the brook comes first it is almost impracticable, if not quite so. When the rail comes first, there are two possibilities of getting a fall; one, if your horse takes off some little distance before he gets to the rail, in which case he is very likely not to jump far enough to clear the brook, and the other if he takes off too near the rail, in which case he is liable to touch the rail, and prevent himself from reaching out far enough with his fore feet to clear the brook.

It is, I believe, a generally assumed maxim, that you ought to ride fast at water, and this may be true where the take off is very soft or where the jump is very wide indeed. But horses can jump much further when going at a slow canter than people give them credit for.

An ordinary hunter galloping on grass will cover from sixteen to eighteen feet at each stride, and a very slight additional spring will take him over twenty feet of ground. Now there are not many people who

would ride a horse *at all*, at anything that measured a clear eighteen feet from bank to bank, and anything less than this a horse could jump at a moderately slow canter. I think therefore, that the practice of going so fast at water or drains has its origin in the fear that the horse would refuse it if you did *not* ride him fast at it, more than from any actual necessity for so doing.

I should prefer riding rather faster at a fence where there was a broad ditch first and then a hedge, as a horse requires a certain amount of impetus to carry him over breadth and height as well. When the hedge comes first it is a choice of evils, and I think I should sooner risk dropping into the ditch than catching the top of the hedge.

A high jump that will neither bend nor break should not be ridden at, at all, except on some particular horses. A short, tall horse with good shoulders is especially able to rise quickly and high, but with a long low horse, or a straight-shouldered horse, there is always more or less danger, and the danger increases very much with the height of the obstacle. When you see a man single himself out from the rest of the field, and ride over a high post and rail, or other obstacle, you will generally find that he is mounted on such a horse as I have described as being adapted to this kind of jump, that is, a horse with very good shoulders, but short in his body, and generally steep in his hind quarters.

And if you try to follow him on a horse that is not formed in this manner, you are running a much greater risk than he did, and are much more likely to get a fall than he was.

Riders without much experience should always bear this in mind, and not think because they see someone else jump a high place with apparent ease, that therefore they can do the same; whereas, probably the man who jumped it would never have even attempted the leap if he had been riding the horse that *they* are riding. Many people have got falls from want of knowledge of this fact.

CHAPTER XIX.

HUNTERS.

Next to racehorses, hunters are without doubt the most valuable class of horse, and command the highest prices. But as I have said elsewhere, there is no distinct breed of horse in this country, either altogether suitable or altogether devoted to the purpose of hunting, that is to say, there are no hunters whose fathers and mothers were hunters, whose grandfathers and grandmothers were hunters, and so on. This is not the case with other descriptions of horses. The ancestors of our present racehorses have been racehorses for a hundred and fifty years or more; our cart-horses are descendants of similar cart-horses; and our roadsters or trotting horses have pedigrees going back to the beginning of this century.

How comes it then that the horse which occupies the second place in the list in value, has no family existence at all? I suppose the reason is to be found in the following consideration: first, that although

nearly all hunters are required to perform nearly similar work, differing more than anything else in the weight they have to carry, and the size and strength therefore that is required in them, still in spite of this similarity people differ very materially in what they consider constitutes a good hunter. A horse that is considered up to a fair hunting weight in one part of the country is called a light weight hack in another part, and a strong horse that is looked upon as a clever weight-carrying hunter in one place is set down as an under-bred brute that is not fit to hunt at all in another. There is also a great difference in opinion as to the weight and size a hunter ought to be, setting aside the question of the weight he can carry. The second reason why there is no distinct breed of hunters I take to be that people found they required particular qualities to form a good hunter, and considered they could obtain these qualities most readily by combining two or more breeds, each of which possesses some of the characteristics they want. It is this method of crossing two animals who are neither of them fit to hunt that leads to so many disappointments in breeding, and causes so many animals to be bred which are not adapted to any particular purpose, but are a sort of nondescript, and fetch but low prices, and even then are generally too dear.

I have read several definitions of a hunter, but none of them give an ordinary reader a very clear

idea of what the animal described would look like. The most valuable description of horse for this purpose, to my mind, would be a horse which had the outline and shape of a cob, the spirit, and blood or breeding of a racehorse, the size and scope of a carriage-horse, and the manners and action of a park hack. A horse that answered this description would in my opinion be found to be about as valuable and serviceable for hunting, or indeed for any purpose short of racing, as any horse that could be bred.

Now if you put a horse of a distinct breed to a mare of the same breed, you may calculate pretty nearly with certainty that the produce will be of the same sort, and resemble its parents both in appearance and qualities. But if you match together two animals of different amounts of blood, of different sizes and different shapes, you may expect a very great variety in the produce, and if all the produce are wanted for one and the same purpose, it is easy to see how it comes about that there are so many failures.

If in addition to this, neither of the parents possess that particular quality or shape which is most essential in the animal you wish to breed, you may predict that failure will be the rule, and that with as near certainty as possible.

To begin with. The most important requisite in a hunter is that he should have a good shoulder; having a good shoulder means both that a horse will

have good action, and a good mouth, and this requisite is common to all classes of hunters, to all sizes, and to all kinds of country.

Now if the parents of a foal have both of them good shoulders, you may reasonably expect the foal will have them, and if, in addition to that, his grandparents had, all four of them, good shoulders, you may almost count with certainty on good shoulders in the produce.

But if instead of both its parents, only one has a good shoulder, you have only one-third of the chances of a good shoulder in the foal, and if neither of the parents have good shoulders, the foal can only have good ones by the merest accident, which would rarely happen.

It may at first sight be thought, that I have stated the chances erroneously in the case of one parent only having a good shoulder, and that it is an even chance whether the foal has them, instead of, as I have said, a two to one chance against it. The following is the explanation.

If one of the parents have a good shoulder, and the other one a bad or indifferent one, you may reasonably expect every foal to be one of the three following shapes.

It will either take after the father, or it will take after the mother, or the characteristics of the two will be blended, and there is no reason for one of

these three results to occur oftener than any of the others.

We will suppose that the sire of a foal has good shoulders, and the dam has bad ones. In the first of the three instances, the foal will take after the sire, and have good shoulders also; in the second case, he will take after the dam, and have bad shoulders; and in the third, his shoulders will be better than those of his dam, and not so good as those of his sire. Now if you breed three foals from these parents, you have no right to expect anything but that you should have one of each sort, and you would therefore only get one out of the three with shoulders as good as his sire's, that is, as good as you want them to be.

It is for want of working out this simple arithmetical calculation that many breeders of horses are disappointed and disgusted with the results obtained.

I wonder how many men after breeding a few horses from one good shaped parent, and one very moderate one, have reasoned thus to themselves, 'I had hoped that the greater part of the stock would be good; but I had a right to expect that *half* of them would be satisfactory; instead of that, I get two bad ones to one good one. What an unluckly beggar I am!'

The usual way for producing a hunter, is for the

sire to be a racehorse, and the dam either a harness mare or hunting mare, a cart-mare or a pony.

Of these, harness and hunting mares are the most commonly bred from. The hunting mare is a cross originally between a racehorse and harness mare, and therefore the greater part of hunters are practically descended, if not immediately, yet at some little distance, from a racing horse and a coaching mare. Now whatever people may say or think, the shoulders of a racehorse are not of as much importance, and are not in consequence as good, as the other parts of them, particularly their loins, back, and quarters, whence their propelling power, and consequently their speed, is principally derived.

If you were to look at any number of racehorses at a meeting, you would find that there were a great number deficient in their shoulders for *one* that was deficient in their hind-quarters.

In coaching or harness mares, again, the position of the shoulder is not of so much consequence as in horses used for riding, and consequently less attention is paid to them, to the detriment of their shape for riding purposes. The consequence of this is that we try to obtain an animal suitable for a purpose where good shoulders are the principal desideratum, by combining two different sorts of animals in which the shoulder is a secondary consideration.

In other words, we put a bad shouldered horse to a bad shouldered mare, and then are surprised to

find that the progeny has not got as good and safe action as we could wish. It is true that a good hunter, as I have stated in describing what a hunter should be, requires one of the characteristics of a racehorse, that is, breeding, and one of the characteristics of a coach-horse, that is, size, and therefore it is desirable that they should have both thoroughbred and coaching blood in their veins; but it is not enough to have these only, and possibly the only way to produce a horse having the qualities of all the four breeds I have mentioned would be to breed one which should claim descent from all four strains.

On this head I shall write more fully in the section devoted to breeding.

CHAPTER XX.

STABLES.

An important point in the welfare and health of a horse is the kind of house he lives in. The majority of stables which have been built a good many years, particularly in towns, are generally troubled with three complaints: they are badly ventilated, badly floored, and badly lighted. The first of these faults is injurious to the horse's wind, the second is injurious to his legs, and the third to his eyesight. I need not say that where anyone has got stables, and wishes to improve them, he must be guided a good deal by what he finds on the ground already, and how much he means to spend in improving them.

But where he has to build new ones from the beginning he can do as he likes. I propose, therefore, to explain what I consider the best and most advisable method of building new stables, and to give my reasons for preferring that method to any other.

Most men who are intending to build new stables, particularly rich men, are anxious that the building should have some pretensions to beauty, and therefore employ an architect to make a drawing or elevation of them to begin with. The architect often makes a pleasing elevation to begin with, and then cuts up the accommodation to suit the drawing, to the discomfiture of the animals which are to live in it.

Instead of this, the owner of the horses ought to mark out on paper exactly what internal accommodation he wants, and then tell the architect to make the outside to fit it and add any ornamentation he pleases. In fact stables should be planned, and built, on a similar method to that by which a man once proposed to construct a cannon, and that was, to get a hole the size you wanted, and put some brass round it.

There are two ways in which a horse can be housed; viz. first, where two or more horses are in one building divided into compartments, and where each horse is tied up, and secondly, where each horse has a separate box and is loose. The first of these are called stalls or standings, and the second are called loose boxes.

It is generally the fashion in building stables to have the greater part of the stables in stalls, with one or more loose boxes. This I do not consider the best plan, for a loose box has all the advantages

which a stall possesses, and some more besides, whereas a stall has no advantage over a loose box in any one particular, while it is inferior to it in many points. For this reason, if I were building stables I should build nothing but loose boxes.

Now supposing they were all loose boxes, there are two ways of constructing them. One is for each box to open into a passage or gangway inside the stable, and the other is for each box to open directly into the open air. Of these two plans I consider the latter is very much the most to be preferred. When the box opens direct into the outward air, as soon as the horse which occupies it goes out, the door can be set wide open, and remain open until he comes back. There are two advantages in this : first, the box gets thoroughly sweetened during the horse's absence, and secondly, when he comes back and is put into it again, there is no perceptible change of the temperature of the air he is breathing.

Now in the other case, unless all the horses in that stable are out at the same time, the door cannot be left open on account of the horses remaining in it. The consequence is, that when the horse that has been out hunting or elsewhere comes home, he goes suddenly out of the cold air that he has been breathing all day, into a temperature very many degrees warmer, and close by comparison. The consequence is that the action of his heart is quickened, and his lungs and throat irritated, to the injury of

his respiratory powers. The best plan, therefore, so far as is practicable, is to have nothing but loose boxes, and for each box to open direct into the outward air.

We now come to the shape and dimensions of the loose box. Here the horse itself must supply us with the measurements requisite. The box should be wide enough for him to turn round without effort, that is, rather wider than the horse's length from his nose to his tail. It should be long enough for the horse to lie down and leave a gangway behind him, and it should be high enough for him not to be able to touch the ceiling with his nose, however high he may lift his head while standing.

As regards the floor or paving, it should be of flat bricks, and should be as level as it can be made, so long as the liquid can run off into the drain. As regards light, a solid door with an opening to admit the light over the top of the door, the same width as the door and eight or ten inches high, will be found to answer the purpose efficiently. The door should be four feet wide. Doors of stables are usually made to open inwards, but I am not sure that this is the best plan. If a horse gets cast in the box, or is taken with colic, he may get rolled up against the door, and then no one can get in to him, whereas if it opened outwards there would be no difficulty. Again, the litter or straw may cause the door to jam and make it difficult to open.

We now come to the much vexed question of ventilation. I am sorry to say that in my opinion there has been a great deal of nonsense both written and talked on this subject. I have been assured by people that their stables were thoroughly ventilated on scientific principles, and still when you went into them they made your eyes water with the closeness, and if you left the door open half a minute, every horse's coat was turned the wrong way owing to their standing in a thorough draught.

First, we must distinguish between temperature and ventilation. A well ventilated stable, like a well ventilated room, means a stable in which the air is sweet and fresh, and this has nothing to do with the heat or coldness of the air that is in it, but the two are generally confounded together.

Now the fact is that if a stable is heated by artificial means, such as hot air or hot water pipes, it may be perfectly well ventilated and as hot as ever you like to make it.

But most stables have no warmth except that derived from the body of the horse that is in them.

In this case it will be apparent that, supposing you wish to keep the box at a given temperature, the bigger the box is the more closely you would have to shut it up to enable the heat from the horse's body to warm it up to that temperature, and the smaller the box is, the more outward and therefore fresh air you could afford to let in, without lowering

the temperature beyond the point you wish. We thus arrive at the fact that if you keep a loose box with a horse in it at a given temperature, *without artificially heating* it, then the larger the box the fouler the air would be, and the smaller the box the sweeter the air would be, or the box would be ventilated in the contrary or inverse proportion to the size of it.

Many people, I daresay, if they were asked this question offhand, would state in reply that exactly the reverse was the case, and that a large box would be sweet and a small one would be stuffy.

The result of this is that we find that where no artificial means are used for heating, the box should be no bigger or higher than is necessary.

We now come to the question of *how* best to obtain the ventilation required, and in order to find this out we must first consider what result we really wish to obtain. Some people wish to keep their stables very much hotter than others. Having the stables hot has only one advantage, and that is, making the horse's coat look better.

On the other hand it has several disadvantages. It makes the horses tender and less able to stand the cold air out of doors, it makes it necessary to shut the stable door immediately you go in to look at them, it makes the air more vitiated and close, and it makes it more dangerous to bring the horse back into it after riding it. I shall assume,

therefore, that what is called a cool stable is desired.

In this case what is needed may, I think, be described as the following.

That the stable should be as sweet as it can be, and that there should be a plentiful supply of fresh air for the horse to breathe, and that there should be as great a freedom from draughts as possible.

It is very common to have an opening, that is, a ventilator, in the middle of the roof of the stable, to let the close air out. This I consider entirely a mistake, for this reason, that if there is any opening in the sides of the stable (which there ought to be), there is a constant stream of cold air coming in and passing over the horse's body, and then going out at the ventilator.

Again, if the door is open, there is a still greater current, and the horse's coat gets what is called set the wrong way. I should therefore discard a ventilator in the roof.

For the same reason it is not desirable to have the door on one side and the open window on another, for when the door is opened there is an immediate current set up. I should therefore have the window used for light and ventilation on the same side as the door. There should be an opening both near the top of the stable and also near the bottom, but both on the same side. By this means the hot air would go out at the top and the cold air would

come in at the bottom, and the air in the stable would be renewed without the current passing the horse. The advantage of this plan is that a much larger opening may be used without injury to the horse, than when it is otherwise constructed. When all the openings are on one side, there can be in a loose box an opening four feet long and one foot wide, without starving the horse, providing it is placed sufficiently high up to prevent the horse putting his eye to it to look out. In a single loose box with the door in the middle of the end opposite the rack and manger, the best place for the light and ventilation is over the top of the door. The door and the window or opening should be in one frame. The door should be four feet broad and seven feet and a half high, and above the door frame there should be an opening as wide as the door, and eight or ten inches deep, which opening should always be open, and not glazed or made to fasten up *at all.*

At the bottom of the door, or in the wall near the door and floor, there should be some small openings to let air in; by this means one of the openings would be considerably above the horse's body, and the others considerably below, and the horse would not stand with his head near either of them.

The rack and manger should be in the two corners farthest away from the door. It is customary now to have a compartment for water as well

as for corn in the mangers. There are various patterns of racks and mangers, none of them possessing any great advantage over the rest. Some are made with the rack for hay above the mangers, some with it on the side of the manger. I could never tell that there was any advantage in having it on a level with the manger, and it is most commonly placed above it.

There are various things used for the horse to lie upon, but straw is the best in the country, and by far the most generally used. In a town, where straw is very dear, sawdust, if it can be obtained, is as good a substitute as any I know. The height of a box may be about nine feet. This will put the ceiling out of the horse's reach and allow room for a proper door and plenty of opening for light and air above it. A horse can turn round easily in eight feet of width, and the length should be about four feet more, that is, the box should be nine feet high, eight feet wide, and twelve feet long. This will give a fair sized and fairly proportioned box for a sixteen hands high horse. A row of boxes such as I have described will be found to be the simplest and cheapest form in which they can be built, and they can either be built with the roof immediately over them, or there can be another storey on the top, forming granaries for corn and hay or sleeping rooms for grooms.

Where stabling is required for a large number of

horses, two rows of boxes may be built, placed back to back; by this means two outer walls and one inner wall is made to serve for two rows of boxes, and the expense per horse is considerably curtailed. I drew a plan about twenty years ago on this principle for some new stables for Lord Henry Bentinck, at Lincoln, to hold about seventy horses, and with the exception of a trifling alteration made at his stud groom's request, they were built as I had drawn, and as I have described them.

In cases where boxes cannot be built, the horses will have to be kept in stalls. The same rules as to ventilation will apply as in boxes, but here instead of doors there will be one door and windows; these should if possible be all on the same side, so that when the door is open there is no current of air blowing *across* the horses, and the door should be in the middle of the row of stalls it opens into. For hunters, the gangway should run behind a single row of stalls, but for cart-horses, &c., it may run between two rows of stalls.

In the preceding part of the chapter I have given a description of the kind of stabling best suited in my opinion for housing any given number of horses in the best possible manner, when the method I have described can be carried out.

In many cases, however, as for instance, in towns, it may happen that it is not convenient or even practicable to devote sufficient space to the

stables to enable each horse to have a separate box.

In these cases the stables should be divided into stalls or standings, varying in number according to the quantity of horses kept.

Where horses are kept in stalls, however many horses are kept, the stables should be so arranged that not more than four or six horses should stand together, otherwise it is difficult to keep the stable at an equal temperature and well ventilated at the same time, and the stable is apt to get close and foul.

There are two ways of arranging stalls, one where the horses all stand in one row, with a passage or gangway behind them, and the other where two rows of horses stand with their tails towards each other, and a gangway between them. Of these two arrangements, the former is the best for well-bred and valuable horses, the latter being chiefly confined to stables for cart-horses and post-horses. Horses of this class as a rule have so much work to do, that when they go in and out of the stable they are too tired for there to be much danger of their kicking one another; but for hunters or horses of a similar class, if the stables were arranged so that they stood back to back, there would be a probability of their kicking one another, and it is much safer for a horse to pass behind one row of horses than between two rows of horses.

In the first case, if one of the horses struck or threatened to strike at another which was being led past it, the horse in avoiding it would go up against a wall.

In the second case he would go up against the heels of another horse, and might easily cause that one to kick him.

In stables consisting of a number of stalls, there will be less space allotted to each horse as regards ground area, and therefore in order to enable each horse to have a sufficient number of cubic feet of air to breathe, the roof should be somewhat loftier than the lowest height which will be sufficient for a loose box.

The stalls should be long enough to hold a full-sized horse, when laid down with his neck stretched out, and wide enough for him to turn round with ease.

The following dimensions will be found to answer the purpose. There is no occasion to make the proportions any larger, however much room the builder has at his disposal. If he is cramped for room, they may be diminished a little.

Each stall should be six feet wide and nine feet long, and the gangway running at the foot of the stalls should be six feet wide, with the gutter or drain running along it about a foot from the bottom of the stalls. The ceiling should be nine feet six inches high or thereabouts, and the door or doors

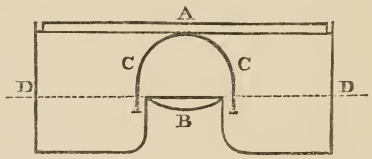
should be seven feet high and four feet wide, and the windows about five feet high and three feet wide. One window to four stalls, or two windows to six stalls, will be about a proper proportion.

Over the ceilings there should be a chamber for hay and straw or corn. This will make the stable both cooler in summer and warmer in winter.

The rules for flooring a stable with stalls will be slightly different from those desirable for loose boxes.

Instead of the lowest part of the stall being in the middle, the floor should slope slightly from the manger end to the other end, sufficiently so to cause any liquid to flow out of the stall, but when that object is attained, the flatter the floor is, the better it is for the horse's legs and feet.

Fig. 17.



A is a square grating; B a pipe, open at the top, to take the liquid away; C C is a metal cup fastened to A. The dotted line, D D, represents the level at which the liquid in the trap will always stand.

There should be a channel or gutter along the backs of all the stalls to take away the wet, with gratings at intervals, into a drain.

Under these gratings should be a bell or stench

trap, to prevent the smell from the drain from coming into the stable. I give a section of an ordinary bell trap. It is kept in order by emptying half a bucket of water down it (fig. 17).

It will be seen at once that the edges of the cup C being under water, no smell can come from pipe B into the stable through the grating A.

We now come to the question of ventilating a stable constructed so as to contain four or more horses, and having only one entrance or door. The main rules which I have given in describing how loose boxes are best ventilated will also apply here, namely, that the openings both for the admission of fresh air and for the escape of the heated air should be so contrived that the current of air should not blow across the bodies of the horses, and that when the stable door was opened, or even left open for some time, it should not set up a draught of air across the horses' backs.

In order to guard against this, the openings should be all on one side of the stables, that is, on the same side as the door.

If there is an opening at all at one of the ends, it should be in that part of the end nearest the wall which contains the other openings.

The best place for the door to be in, is in the middle of the wall behind the horses, so that the gangway which runs along the foot of the stalls is between the door and the horses.

There will also not be either light enough or air enough for a stable such as I have described from an opening immediately above the door, and one or more windows will be required.

These should be ordinary sash windows with panes, and should be made to open both at the top and bottom, but as it will be necessary to have some permanent opening, there should be one or two openings constructed, so that they could not be shut.

A very good plan, and as simple a one as any, is to cut out one or more panes of glass from the top of the windows, and to keep them always open.

The end of the stall where the horse's head is should have a rack for hay, a manger for corn, and a trough for water. Some stable fittings are made with the rack on the same level as the other two, so that the horse eats the hay from below him.

But the common way is to have the rack screwed to the wall in one corner above the horse's head, or on a level with it.

I do not know of any great advantage or disadvantage in either plan over the other.

It would I think be a judicious plan, where ponies are kept, to have their racks made on purpose for them, and half the ordinary size. It is difficult for the groom or man who feeds the horses to estimate the quantity of hay he gives the horses, except by filling the rack full of hay shaken up light, and the consequence is, that ponies generally get

more hay given them in proportion to their requirements than horses do, that is, they generally get more than they ought.

It will be noticed by persons conversant with horses, that while full-sized horses often go roarers or whistlers, they seldom go broken-winded; while the reverse is the rule with ponies, which seldom turn roarers or whistlers, but are more liable to become broken-winded.

The explanation I take to be this; that ponies as a rule being hardier, and having a better constitution than full-sized well-bred horses, are less accustomed to catch cold, while on the other hand, being greater eaters, and, from the cause I have mentioned, being supplied with a greater bulk of food than they ought to have, they are more liable than horses, to be worked, and ridden or driven fast, with an overloaded stomach, than horses are, and that it is this cause which produces broken wind.

In cart-horse stables, there is not the same objection to having two rows of horses standing with their tails towards each other.

In this case the gangway will be between the two rows of horses, and the door should be at one end of the gangway and a window at the other.

Although in this arrangement the window will be at one side of the stable and the door at the other, yet still when the door is open the current of air will not blow across the bodies of the horses, and in

addition to this, cart-horses being hardy, and being used to be constantly in the open air, are not so easily affected by cold and draughts as better bred horses, and being much larger and bulkier they require a greater amount of ventilation to keep their stable wholesome and sweet.

CHAPTER XXI.

STABLE UTENSILS, ETC.

It is desirable for anyone not knowing much about the care of horses in a stable, to make himself acquainted with the names and appearance of the different things used, and what they are used for. Without this knowledge he will not be able, when his groom asks him to buy anything, to decide whether it is a reasonable request or not.

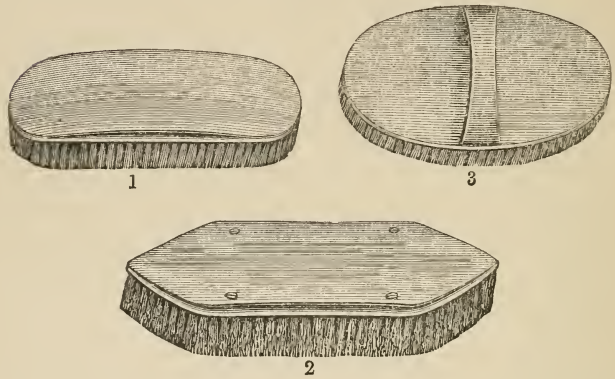
I propose to give a list and description of most of the things used in the stable, with a slight sketch of some of them, so as to enable anyone not acquainted with the management of horses to enable himself to identify and recognise each article.

The things I am going to describe are, I should say, the *least* in number and the simplest in form that a groom can do his horses properly with; that is, he may require more, but cannot do with less.

We will begin with the brushes. Several of these will be required of various sorts. There are three brushes used in *cleaning* the horse; a brush like a

large hair-brush without any handle, and with a strap across the back for the groom to slip his hand into; this is called the body brush. Another brush, similar to a clothes brush, and a third something like a scrubbing brush. The first is called a water brush, and the second a dandy brush. In

Fig. 18.



Water brush (back). Dandy brush (back). Body brush (back).

addition to these brushes, a brush, or rather broom, will be required to clean the stable floor and walls; this is called a stable broom; and a brush to brush a carriage, if one is kept, and a long thin brush called a spoke brush, to brush the spokes of the wheels. The groom will also want a brush to brush his own clothes, and two brushes to clean his own boots.

I have not given a drawing of a clothes brush or blacking brushes, as they are articles of common use.

The brush required for the inside of the carriage is simply a large clothes brush.

A groom will require various articles in addition to the brushes, viz. a currycomb, which is an iron tool; a mane comb, for combing the horse's mane and tail; a footpicker, for picking the dirt, &c., out of their feet; a bit polisher, resembling a number of little curb chains joined together, and a scraper to scrape the wet and mud off the horse. The scraper is simply a piece of flexible flat iron band, with a handle at each end.

He will also require some sets of flannel bandages and one or two of linen ones. These are made of strips of flannel about six or eight inches wide and three yards long, with two tape strings at one end, and are used to wrap round the horse's legs after being washed or cleaned, on coming in from work. The linen ones are to apply wet when the horse's legs have sustained any blow or wrench; two or three sponges, two wash-leathers, some wooden buckets, one or two galvanised iron ones, a wheelbarrow and shovel, a hay fork and a manure fork, complete pretty nearly the requirements of the stable. There should also be in the granary where the corn is kept, a wooden shovel to turn it over from time to time, and there should be a quartern measure made of wood, and holding exactly a quarter of a peck, one filling of this measure being a proper feed to give the horse at once. It is very common to use a flat

open basket-work measure to feed the horses from, but the corn should always be served out by the wooden measure, otherwise there is no certainty of the horse getting the proper quantity.

A corn bin will of course be required, and this should consist of at least three compartments; one for oats, one for beans or peas, and one for bran. There is no peculiar feature about the corn bin, except that as the food put into it is generally kept in sacks, it should not hold less in each compartment than about a sack and a quarter, so that it can be filled by putting the contents of a new sack in before it has become quite empty. This I need hardly say is the smallest size. After that, the size must of course depend upon how many horses are fed from it, and how much corn is consequently required.

In some stables there is a spout from the granary above, so that a feed can be drawn out from a quantity of oats, much in the same way as you draw a glass of beer from a barrel. I do not know of any advantage there is in this plan, and it labours under the disadvantage of your not being able to see how the corn is going.

I think a spout or pipe with a wide funnel-shaped opening in the floor of the granary, and a smaller opening immediately over the corn bin, would be a useful practical addition, so that when a number of sacks of oats are placed in the granary, the groom could empty one of them down the pipe

into the corn bin, without having to carry it down on his back. It is not every groom who is able to carry a sack of oats weighing twelve stone down a ladder, and throwing them down is objectionable.

A skep, or scuttle, to collect the dirt of the horses, will also be required. This can be made either of basket work or galvanised iron. An ordinary mop is also desirable.

CHAPTER XXII.

COMMON UNSOUNDNESSES.

I HAVE no intention of making in this work a classification of the various diseases and injuries horses are subject to, and the modes in use of treating. Such a work belongs properly to the veterinary surgeon's department, and not to a work treating only of the management of horses in health, in the stable, the hunting field, and on the road. Many books written about horses are apt to merge into a treatise of this sort, mentioning every complaint as if it was equally common, and giving directions how to cure it. Such a work could only be of use to a professional veterinary surgeon, who most likely knows already more than the book can tell him, or a man who has a large stud of horses, every one of them amiss or unsound, and each horse suffering from a different complaint. I propose, however, to describe a few of the causes of unsoundness which are most commonly met with in purchasing or keeping horses. There are some unsoundnesses much

more often met with than others, and some rarely heard of.

Thus, blindness and roaring are both unsoundnesses, but there would be fifty horses affected with the latter for one of the former. Curbs, spavins, and ringbone are all sources of lameness, but a man will meet with half-a-dozen cases of curbs for one of spavins, and a ringbone is comparatively seldom seen.

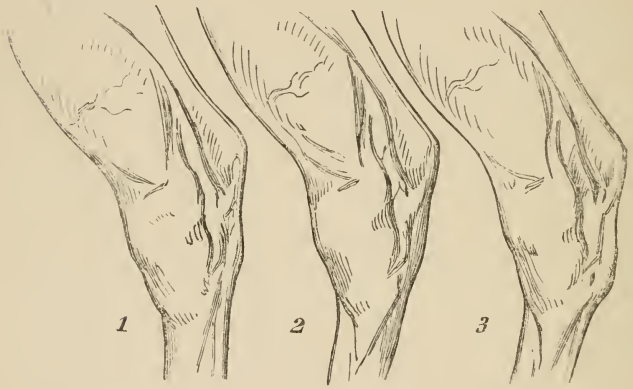
There are also certain causes of unsoundness which attack only particular breeds of horses, and such as are used for particular purposes. Thus, you never see a heavy-bred cart-horse suffering from a curb, while on the other hand they suffer from what is called a sidebone, that is, an ossification of the cartilages above the hoof, in a number of instances.

In examining a horse then, you should pay particular attention to particular points, varying in the class of horse you are looking at.

We will begin with the horse's hind legs, as these are the ones where some of the most common forms of unsoundness are to be found. Now if you stand alongside of a horse, and run your eye down his outline, beginning at his tail, the point of his hind leg corresponding to the knee of the fore leg is the hock, and the next joint below that is the fetlock or ankle; from the point of the hock down the leg to the fetlock should be a perfectly straight line. If it bulges out a little below the point of the

hock, the horse has got curby hocks, or has sprung a curb. These two things are not identical, for a horse is born with curby hocks, but springing a curb is the result of an accident or sprain. A horse whose hind legs are perfectly straight and well-formed when foaled, may put out a curb afterwards, while a horse with curby hocks may never get any worse than he was at first. As a rule, however,

FIG. 19. FIG. 20. FIG. 21.



Well-formed hock with curb. Curby hock without curb. Curby hock with curb.

horses with weak or badly-shaped hocks are less able to bear a violent strain upon them, and are more likely to put out a curb, than horses with well-shaped hocks; or to put it in another way, horses with badly-shaped hocks have a *tendency* to *curbs*. I have given an outline of three improperly shaped hocks, and one well-formed one. The first is that of

a horse with well-shaped hocks naturally, but which has put out a curb. The second is of a horse with naturally curby hocks, but which have not developed into a decided curb. The third is the leg of a curby-hocked horse *with* curbs.

Fig. 22.

It will be seen that in my drawings the hind leg is more bent under the horse's body in the two curby-shaped hocks than in the good one.

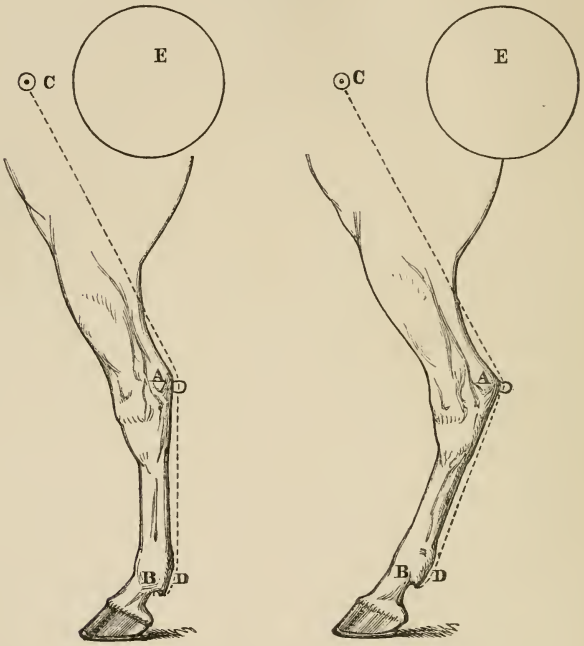
The reason for this is, that as far as my own observation has gone, I have found that curby-shaped hocks are almost always (when they exist), found in conjunction with a bent formation of hind leg.

And this I think is likely to be the case, for the strain on the back sinews of the horse's hind leg must be much greater in proportion to the weight imposed on it when the bone of the hind leg is in a slanting position than when it is vertical.

In one case the bone will sustain the whole weight, if required, without the assistance of the sinew. In the other case the bone by itself would practically not support any weight at all. I will endeavour to make this clear by a diagram, in which the bone is represented as a single column, and the

sinew (the sprain of which forms the curb), as a string. I have supported the column in the same manner in which the horse's hind leg is supported by the foot. But as I am only treating of the part

FIG. 23.



from the hock to the ankle, I will suppose that all the part below the ankle is rigid, that is, that the column and base is all in one piece. Now if A B be an upright column, and C D a string fastened to the column at D, and running through A to some point above the column at C, it will be seen at once that

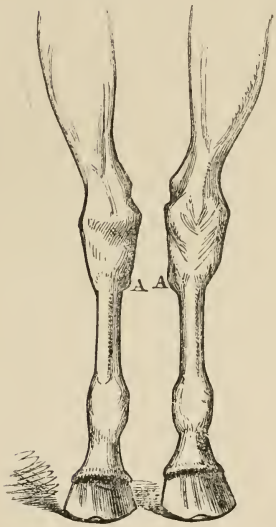
a great weight, E, may rest vertically on A B, without any pressure being placed on C D. If, however, you tilt the column, A B, over in a slanting direction, leaving C D attached to it at D and A as before, then the column A B will practically not support any of the weight at all, by itself, and the weight will fall on the chord C D. For this reason, the more bent the hind leg is under the horse, the greater the strain on the sinew, and the greater the danger of springing a curb.

After a curb, the most common affection of the hind legs, in hunters especially, are spavins. These are also in the hocks, but this time on the inside of the legs, that is, the side that is next to the other leg, and instead of standing at the side of the horse to see them, it is requisite to stand immediately in front of the horse, and look between its fore legs, at the hocks; you can also detect a spavin by standing immediately behind the horse, but a little on one side, or by standing in the position you are when mounting with one foot in the stirrup. In each of these latter positions you can only observe the outline of one leg, in the first of the leg away from you, and in the second the leg next you. I should prefer myself to walk slowly completely round the horse, observing the inside of the hock while doing so. By this means you get a view of the hock in every position, and if there is any excrescence it is easy to perceive it.

There are popularly said to be two sorts of spavins; a bog or blood spavin, and a bone spavin, but I think that there are two distinct species of bone spavins differing from each other.

I will first describe the bone spavin, as it is the most common and the most injurious. Standing then in front of the horse, and looking between his fore legs, the hind legs will look something like what I have drawn in the figure. If the hocks are well formed and free from unsoundness, the outline will go down the leg to the fetlock without any excrescence or lump; if the hock is spavined there will be an excrescence where I have drawn it at A, one of the figures representing a hock with the larger sort of bone spavin, and the other with the smaller one. The larger one is easier to detect in this position than the smaller one.

FIG. 24.



I cannot describe it better than by saying it looks as if someone had taken half a walnut shell, and inserted it under the skin in that place; sometimes it is much bigger than that, and about the size of a

tablespoon, and in this case it is not quite so easy to be certain about it.

Some horses with large coarse bony strong hocks have a formation there which very much resembles a bone spavin, though it is quite a natural formation, and does not imply unsoundness. If the horse has one hock larger than the other it is a spavin, but if they are both exactly alike it may be the natural formation of the hock, or it may be that the horse has a bone spavin in each leg. Nothing but practice, and being acquainted with the shape of horses' hocks, will enable anyone to distinguish between these two, and it is difficult to describe it on paper.

The second sort of bone spavin I have mentioned is a different enlargement, and occurs in a different place; it is very near where the other is, but slightly more in front of the leg, and is more like a hazel-nut in shape and size. The best way of detecting this spavin is by running your hand gently down the inside of the horse's hind leg, taking care to speak to the horse, and to stand in front of the leg in case the horse lashes out or kicks when you touch him. There is a large vein or artery running down the inside of the hind leg, which is very perceptible in well-bred horses, and this sort of bone spavin is immediately under this vein, and when present causes the vein to start out and look more full than it ought to do. If one of these veins looks fuller or more distended than the other, it should be very

carefully examined for this particular unsoundness, as it is very probable that it will be found to exist. In addition to examining the horse's legs carefully, there is another method of ascertaining the existence of a bone spavin, particularly of the last kind, and it is this.

If you ride a horse up to a flight of sheep hurdles at a slow trot, and he jumps them without dwelling, and without touching them with his hind feet, he is probably free from bone spavin, but if he hits them, and when you continue to try him backwards and forwards, still at a trot, he continues to hit them, it is highly probable that he is affected with bone spavin. The reason of this is, that a horse with a bone spavin cannot bend his hocks and tuck his hind legs under him so well as a sound horse. They can get over a flight of rails easily by galloping at them, and taking off a long way from them, but they cannot lift their hind feet over them when ridden slowly.

BOG OR BLOOD SPAVIN.

The other sort of spavin is called a bog or blood spavin, or, if it goes through the hock from one side to the other, it is called a thoroughpin. It is less common and of less importance than a bone spavin, and is I believe nothing more than wind-gall seated in the hock instead of in the fetlock. It does not interfere much with a horse's value for work;

and when I have said that a horse is better without them, I have said nearly all that is to be said against them.

RING-BONE.

Another unsoundness, but not at all a common one, is a bony enlargement of the pastern joint between the foot and the fetlock. It does not call for any particular description, and is not very common.

FORE LEGS.

We now come to the common unsoundnesses of the fore legs, of which I shall mention four. Splints; sprain of the back sinew; fever in the feet; and navicular lameness; to which I might add another, namely, sand-crack.

Three of these are visible to anyone when they are present in a horse—splints, sprained sinew, and sand-crack, while the other two are only to be detected by the alteration produced in the horse's action.

Splints are chiefly to be found in young horses, and unless very large, they generally disappear as the horse grows older. They consist of a bony enlargement on the inside of the leg, between the knee and the fetlock. They do not invariably constitute unsoundness. If they are towards the front they do not affect the horse's action, except when they are

large and the horse has a narrow chest, in which case he will hit them with the other foot and lame himself. In that case I think they would constitute an unsoundness. If they are towards the back of the leg, so as to press against the tendon, they will lame the horse and constitute an unsoundness. Except in these cases they are not of material consequence, and are chiefly objectionable from their appearance.

FIG. 25.

I have given a sketch of a fore leg with a large splint immediately below the knee, but it may come anywhere, from where I have drawn it down to the pastern joint or ankle.

The next unsoundness chiefly affects racehorses, in fact it is by far the most general complaint they suffer from in the fore legs, and it might almost be said that it was the natural termination to a racehorse's career that he should break down in one of his fore legs. Hunters sometimes become lamed from this cause, but not often, while roadsters and carriage-horses may be said to be practically exempt from it. It entirely cripples the horse at the time it is done, and although after a time he may recover enough to go sound, and even stand a little work, still his leg is never to be depended on, and anyone

should be careful at what price they bought a horse with symptoms of this complaint, and had better not buy him at all.

It is an enlargement of the coverings of the large tendon running down the back of the fore leg from the knee to the fetlock, and gives that tendon the appearance of being thickened and enlarged, or in bad cases of being bowed out backwards. This unsoundness is so common a source of injury and loss to the owners of racehorses, that it is to be wondered that more attention and pains have not been bestowed on trying to find out the cause of it, and as it cannot be remedied after it has happened, to try and prevent its happening. It must strike anyone who gives the matter his consideration, as an extraordinary thing, that while a thoroughbred horse can be used to carry from twelve to fourteen stone through one day's hunting after another, and be galloping over all sorts of ground, and jumping all sorts of fences, often for some hours at a time, a case of breakdown of the back sinew should be rarely heard of, and still that the same animals, when galloping for less than two miles on smooth flat turf, with no more than what in hunting parlance would be called a feather weight on their backs, should be constantly failing in this point.

I believe the explanation would be found in two distinct causes.

The first is that from the method in which they

are prepared for the race, their sinews are not in the same healthy condition as when they are hunting, and are consequently more disposed to injury.

And secondly, that the nature of the ground on which they gallop in racing, is more likely to injure them in this particular manner.

I think it is probable that both these causes are in operation at once, and that the great majority of breakdowns is due to both these causes at once.

That is, that if the horse was trained differently, he would not break down so often, and if he were trained as he is, and raced on different ground, he would not break down so often.

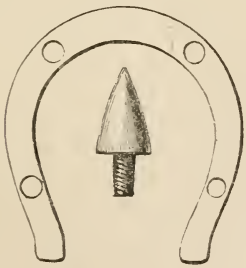
A horse, in being trained for a race, is galloped every day, some of the time at nearly full speed, with a very light weight on his back. The weight is not sufficient to prevent him from extending himself to the fullest stride he is capable of compassing, so that his sinews and muscles are constantly stretched to the utmost extent they will reach. This must, one would think, in time have an injurious effect on them, and render them less capable of standing a sudden strain.

Now when a horse is galloping on the turf in summer time, which is when the greater part of the flat races are run, he is shod with polished slippery shoes, and the turf is hard and slippery; the consequence is, that he is liable to slip slightly at any moment, and if he is already stretched to the full

extent he is capable of, the extra tension produces the breakdown. This might I think in many cases be avoided by having small short spikes attached to his shoes, similar to those worn in the soles of their shoes by cricketers, pedestrians, and others. If the racing shoes were made with two small holes near the heel, and one or two near the toe, the spikes could be screwed or hammered in immediately before the race, and removed after it, by unscrewing or by a tap with a hammer, in order to enable the horse to travel comfortably on the road. Such an arrangement would prevent a horse's shoe from slipping on the ground, however hard and smooth it was, and might be the means of preventing many accidents which would otherwise happen.

FIG. 27.

FIG. 26.



I have drawn a picture of the shoe, and the spike I should propose to insert. The spike being the

same size as the drawing or thereabouts, and the round marks in the shoe indicating the holes (fig. 26).

I also give a sketch showing the appearance of a fore leg that has given way, in order to enable my readers to recognise one when they see one. The drawing represents a very bad case of breakdown, but a horse might be practically broken down which did not show nearly such a curve as I have drawn (fig. 27).

The next species of unsoundness is fever in the feet; this cannot be detected by looking at the feet, but only by observing the horse as he stands in the stable, and by feeling his feet, which will be much hotter than if they were all right.

Navicular lameness is the worst and most insidious unsoundness which horses are troubled with. It is imperceptible to the eye as far as an examination of the horse's feet go, and in the earlier stages is difficult to detect in his action, if both feet are equally affected. It is perfectly incurable, and renders the horse eventually useless. It is said to be caused by riding a horse too far and too fast, when not accustomed to it, but it is also said to be hereditary. There is nothing much to be said about this species of lameness in the way of description, which will enable any unaccustomed person to recognise it.

If a horse is lame in his fore feet without having received any blow or injury, and without

any heat or any perceptible cause for the lameness, you may set it down in most cases as navicular lameness.

If a horse is sometimes lame and sometimes sound in its fore feet, without any particular reason, it is very likely to be the beginning of navicular lameness.

A veterinary surgeon will be able from experience to tell you whether it is so or not, but he could hardly explain to you *how* he could tell, and he could not teach anyone unaccustomed to see lame horses how to judge for himself. I should think that bad shouldered horses would be more likely to acquire this disease than good ones, if they each had gone through the same amount of work; for this reason, that a bad shouldered horse not only puts his fore foot down more heavily than a good shouldered one naturally, but also that he carries his rider more forward, and therefore has more weight on the top of his fore legs. The concussion, therefore, must be greater in every step that he takes.

It is found, however, I believe, that this disease attacks good shouldered horses as much, if not more, than bad ones; so much so that it is sometimes called the curse of good horses.

How then are we to explain the discrepancy.

The explanation, I take it, is this: that when a horse has a good, willing temper, and pleasant easy

action, he is apt to get a great deal more work than if he is the contrary, and that straight shouldered horses have less taken out of them owing to the unpleasantness of their action. A horse, too, with a good middle and strong constitution, will travel much greater distances without being knocked up than a light-made shelly one would, and if in addition to that they are pleasant and easy to ride, it is very apt to fall to their lot to *have* to go long distances and be ridden fast, to the wear, tear, and detriment of their feet.

This is the only way in which I can account for good horses becoming lame of this complaint oftener than bad ones, if indeed it is the case.

As far as my own experience goes, the contrary is the case, for out of four animals I remember to have had to sell from navicular lameness, three have had bad shoulders. What I have said above would also to a certain extent account for its being considered hereditary, for a mare might be a very good one and be over-ridden in consequence, and then become lame, and after that breed a foal which was equally good, and became lamed from the same cause as its mother, but with fair treatment neither of these two would have become lamed.

Navicular lameness attacks the fore legs, but ring-bones may come on either fore or hind legs.

In addition to lameness, horses may become

unsound from defects either in their breathing or in their eyesight.

I do not purpose to treat of the latter cause of unsoundness. It would be difficult to describe, and no one unaccustomed to examine the eyes of a horse would be able to tell much about them.

Defects of the wind are more common. They may be classed as follows.

Roaring, whistling, and grunting.

Roaring is when a horse makes a noise when galloping similar to an animal roaring. It is easy to detect when it exists, but I think it is sometimes supposed to exist when it does not. If a horse is a roarer, he will make more noise as he goes further, and will make more noise when labouring in deep ground than when galloping on grass, and will make as much or more noise when he is blown than when he first starts. A horse to be tested for roaring should be galloped fast in deep ground and made to blow.

When a horse is a whistler he makes a noise more like the singing of a tea-kettle than anything else. In order to detect it he should be cantered *slowly*, for if you gallop him enough to make him blow, the noise he makes in breathing will overpower the very slight noise of the whistle, and you will very often be unable to hear it. In this respect it differs from roaring, for the more a horse is blown the more you will hear him roar,

while the more he blows the less you will hear him whistle.

Whistling is sometimes only the beginning of what will end in roaring; that is, a whistler will often become a roarer, but there are also cases where it is a separate complaint, and does not develop into roaring.

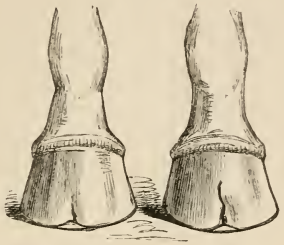
Grunting is when a horse grunts on being either suddenly struck or startled, or on jumping or any sudden exertion. It must here be noted that although a horse that roars or whistles will grunt on being suddenly struck, it does not follow that because a horse grunts he is therefore a roarer or whistler; sometimes he will grunt and do nothing else. In this case he is called a grunter, and is not sound; but it is not a very serious ailment when simply confined to grunting.

SAND-CRACK,

Although it is not necessarily an unsoundness, is very likely to produce it. It is a slight split in the hoof of the toe, generally right in front, extending upwards more or less. It is perhaps possible to eradicate it, but the same cause which produced it at first would produce it again, and a horse with any tendency to it should be avoided. I have given a sketch of a slight sand-crack, and also of a bad one, seen as standing in front of the horse. It affects the

fore-feet. The only remedy I know is to draw a red-hot knitting needle, or something similar, across the

FIG. 28.



hoof above the crack, and burn the hoof right through the track the crack would take. This partly melts the horn, and may stop the crack from spreading, and then as the foot grows the cracked part will gradually be cut away by the blacksmith.

String-halt is another doubtful unsoundness. This is when a horse takes up one of his hind legs higher than usual with a jerk or click. Unless it is bad, as far as my knowledge goes, a horse is no worse for it.

Crib-biting is a trick, and is sometimes called an unsoundness and sometimes a vice. A horse that is warranted both sound and free from vice can be returned for it, as not answering the description.

It consists in the horse seizing the manger or the top of a gate or a rail with his teeth, and apparently swallowing a mouthful of air at the same time, making a noise something like a hiccup. It is

I believe incurable, and the habit increases. It is supposed that a horse that does it does not keep his condition well, but it is a mysterious complaint, and I do not think much is known either about the cause of it, or the effect it has on a horse.

Weaving is another mysterious habit, and consists in the horse standing still and swaying his head first to one side of the stall and then to the other. It is a trick common to horses and polar bears, but I have never seen any other animals do it. It has a tendency when much indulged in to make a horse much thinner than he would otherwise be.

I do not know whether the law holds that a horse is returnable for it when warranted sound and free from vice, but a horse is better without it.

Speedy cutting is when a horse cuts one fore leg immediately below the knee with the other foot. It is dangerous, as a horse might throw himself down by stunning his leg.

Cutting is when a horse cuts one leg at the fetlock, with the other foot. Both these complaints arise from a horse having too narrow a chest, and as a horse's chest has a tendency to get wider as he gets older and thickens, these complaints often disappear. A wide chested horse is exempt from them. Either is a vexatious and troublesome complaint.

Overreaching is when a horse cuts his fore heel with the shoe of his hind foot. It may be done

either in trotting or galloping, but is generally done in galloping, and in deep ground.

It can be avoided by taking care that there is no sharp edge at the back of the hind shoe, but although this will prevent the horse cutting himself, it will not prevent him from bruising himself, and a horse that does it is not fit to gallop much in deep ground.

CHAPTER XXIII.

BREEDING.

I NOW come to by far the most important part of my subject in a national point of view, although it concerns only a limited number of those who ride and require horses, and that is the breeding of horses, on which the supply and character of English horses depend.

I have stated before that I believed there were only four distinct breeds of horses in this country, putting ponies out of the question.

These four breeds are 1st, The racehorse or thoroughbred horse; 2nd, The coach horse or carriage horse; 3rd, The roadster or trotter; and 4th, The cart-horse or dray-horse. By a distinct breed I mean when a horse's parents are *both* of the same breed, and used for the same purpose, as himself, and called by the same name.

It must strike anyone thinking about it for the first time as an extraordinary thing that three of our most important classes of horses, as far as value and

usefulness are concerned, have no distinct existence as a breed, namely, our hunters, our best class of carriage horses, and our hacks that are not trotters or cobs; and it is, I think, much to be regretted that it has not been attempted to produce a breed of any of these capable of reproducing itself. Whether such a breed could be produced I could not undertake to say. Probably the first efforts would produce a mongrel breed, but if they were persevered in the characteristics and qualities desired might become stamped on the progeny, so that the animal you want might be produced with as much certainty as a foxhound.

To begin with racehorses, or thoroughbred horses.

I may say, I think with truth, that the thoroughbred horse is mostly used either to produce racehorses or to improve some other breed, but by far the most to produce racehorses. What I mean is that nineteen out of twenty thoroughbred foals are bred for the purposes of the turf and intended for racing in the first instance. The natural consequence of this is that those animals are bred from and selected, which are best fitted for that purpose, and the shape of the animal becomes modified accordingly.

Now the object of racing is to carry a comparatively light weight for a comparatively short distance at the greatest possible speed, and consequently

breeders try to produce thoroughbred horses with those shapes and qualities which will best enable them to do this. But the same shape which will carry a light weight for a short distance at great speed is not the one best adapted to carry a much heavier weight for a much longer distance, at a slower rate.

Again, the action best suited for getting over very smooth turf where there is nothing to throw a horse down, is not that best suited to galloping safely at three-quarters speed over rough, uneven, and broken ground. It is true that there are exceptions, and that horses are to be found who can perform well in both capacities, but they are only exceptions and not the rule. Now almost all hunters are bred from a thoroughbred horse, that is, a race-horse, that is, a horse which has been bred for a purpose requiring a different shape and different qualities from a hunter, and can we wonder that under these circumstances so few really good hunters are produced from the foals bred? And when in addition to this the dam of the foal is, as it often is, a mare bred and intended for harness, for which purpose many of the chief points which go to make a good hunter are not required, and are therefore not cultivated, when this, I say, is the case the only cause for surprise is that *any* of the stock so bred should be as good as they sometimes are.

All hunters very nearly, are bred from thorough-

bred sires, whatever the dam is, and out of the great number of different strains of blood which the Stud Book now contains, we may consider that all thoroughbred horses are good enough as far as *blood* goes to get hunters, that is, that of thoroughbred horses one strain of blood is as good as another for hunters as far as breeding *only* goes. But when we come to shape, the case is quite different.

Of a great number of thoroughbred horses very few comparatively possess the shape and outline desirable in a good hunter, and as that outline will be sure to be more or less transmitted to the offspring, it follows that the number of racehorses of a suitable shape for breeding hunters are few.

Or to sum up, any thoroughbred horse's *pedigree* is good enough, but few thoroughbred horses' *shape* is right. This is the reverse of the case in breeding racehorses. Here experience seems to show that while horses run successfully in all shapes, on the other hand some strains of thoroughbred blood show a marked superiority over others, in the number of good runners produced, while some are totally unsuccessful.

In looking through the strains of blood there is perhaps no horse whose stock are more numerous or have been more successful on the turf than *Touchstone*. He was a good racehorse himself, and of good colour (dark brown) and a good constitution, and he lived to a great age, and his progeny have

run well when mixed with almost any other strain or family.

The consequence of this is that his descendants at the stud are more numerous than those of any other horse, so much so that it is difficult at the present time to find many strains of blood which are celebrated and which are *not* descended from Touchstone.

Now Touchstone was, in my opinion, a decidedly faulty horse in shape for hunting purposes, owing to his shoulders being upright, and he also possessed to a remarkable extent the power of transmitting his shape to his progeny, and from this cause a faulty or upright shoulder is spread as it were broadcast among the well-bred horses of England.

Another horse who was equally famous at the same time was Irish Birdcatcher, whose stock, principally through one of his grandsons, Stockwell, have won as many races, I should suppose, as Touchstone's. Irish Birdcatcher's shape, judging from his immediate descendants, was much more suitable for hunting purposes, and his descendants, where they are not also descended from Touchstone, would probably be as desirable for hunting purposes as any strain of blood we are likely to find.

Another horse from whom a numerous tribe have descended is Blacklock, whose blood his grandson Voltigeur has chiefly brought into notice.

One of Blacklock's grandsons, the Cure, was a

horse eminently fitted—with one exception, and that was his small size—for breeding good hunters. The Cure was comparatively a failure as a sire of race-horses, and his descendants are not numerous, but where any of them have been devoted to purposes similar to hunting, that is, hurdle-racing and steeple-chasing, they have shown a great capacity for jumping, so much so that the phrase 'jumping Cures' was almost a proverb at one time.

It is to be regretted that there are not more well-bred animals descended from this horse, but it is quite possible that some one of his immediate descendants may possess as much merit as he did, and that it may be better appreciated.

Another horse from whom a numerous tribe have descended is Sultan. Sultan was formed in a manner likely to make him a pleasant horse, either to ride on the road or hunt.

He is principally known in this country through three of his sons, Hampton, Bay Middleton, and Glencoe.

The third of these, Glencoe, whose portrait forms the frontispiece of this work, was one of the most perfect models of a horse for all purposes that to my thinking I have ever seen. And it is a remarkable corroboration of this, that his stock should have excelled in two different countries in two totally distinct capacities.

In England a great number of the best race-

horses are descended from him through his daughter Pocahontas, and in America a great number of the best trotters are descended from him. And he was a very good racehorse himself.

Of the other two sons of Sultan which I have mentioned, Hampton was the founder of a considerable portion of Sir Tatton Sykes's stud, which were chiefly used for hunting purposes and excelled in this department, while Bay Middleton not only won the Derby himself, but left two sons who also won the Derby.

Stockwell and Rataplan, and King Tom, Knight of Kars, and Knight of St. Patrick, are all the sons of Pocahontas, who was a daughter of Glencoe. Three of these, Stockwell, Rataplan, and Knight of St. Patrick, are grandsons both of Birdcatcher and Glencoe.

In trying to breed any particular form or description of animal, it must be borne in mind that you cannot count with any degree of certainty on obtaining any particular shape, unless both the parents possess it, and sometimes even then you may fail to get it, as the foal may take after some former member of the family.

Thus if you want to be *sure* of a good shoulder it is unwise to breed from either parent with an indifferent one.

If one of the parents has got curby hocks, it is highly probable that the stock will have a tendency

that way; while if either sire or dam belong to a breed below that which you wish to produce, you cannot reckon with certainty on obtaining an animal with the quality and breeding required for your purpose.

To give an instance. If both sire and dam are thoroughbred, the foal will be thoroughbred, and all the foals will always be thoroughbred. If sire and dam are both of a coaching breed, all the stock will be coach-horses, and in either case you can reckon with certainty on what description of animal you will obtain. But if the sire is a thoroughbred and the dam a coaching mare, one foal may look nearly thoroughbred and be a good hunter, and another may look like a coach-horse and not be fit for anything else, and it is this variety in the produce which makes it such an uncertainty how you will succeed in breeding hunters in this manner.

Now if hunters were a distinct breed, tracing back for some generations, you would be able to breed a hunter with as much certainty as you can now breed a cart-horse. You might breed a good hunter or a bad one, just as you now may breed a good cart-horse or a bad one, but it would be classed as a hunter and not as anything else. I have been told that any attempt to do this would be a failure, and would produce a mongrel breed, and that it would be impossible to keep up the good qualities of the breed without a constant infusion of pure blood.

As the experiment has not, as far as I know, been yet tried with hunters, we cannot speak from experience concerning this particular class of horse, but let us consider what has been the origin of and result in some other descriptions of horses.

The present English racehorse is originally descended from Arab and Barb horses coming from Africa on the one hand, and English mares on the other. But racehorses are never now produced in this way, and when the experiment is tried the produce is found to be very inferior to those bred from English racehorses.

But the first specimens of the English racer must have been a mixed and consequently a mongrel breed, and we thus have an instance of a mongrel breed becoming by careful selection vastly superior to the first specimens bred, or to either of the breeds from which their ancestors originally sprung.

No Arab of the present day is anything like a match in size, strength, beauty, or speed, for the pick of our English thoroughbreds.

To take another instance. The breed of horses known as American trotters is now a distinct breed, that is, no one, I believe, as a rule, attempts to breed a trotter in America from two animals which are not trotters themselves. But the best trotters in America come from English thoroughbred stock originally, and it is worthy of notice that some of the best trotters in America and some of the best

racehorses in England are all descended from one thoroughbred horse, Glencoe.

I will not enlarge further on this topic, but will proceed to give a few statistics and facts about breeding generally, which I have been enabled, through the kindness of people more experienced than myself, to obtain.

They are taken chiefly from experience with thoroughbred stock, as this is almost the only sort which are bred in sufficient numbers and have sufficient attention paid to them to get any reliable information about. But many of the facts mentioned would probably hold good equally in other breeds, or in mixing one breed with another.

The shape of the foal takes more after the sire than the dam. Some few mares breed more to themselves than the horse, but as a rule most breed to the horse in regard to make and shape, and therefore if you were to put a number of mares to the same horse, and one mare to different horses in succession, the foals by the same horse would bear a greater resemblance to their sire than the one mare's foals would bear to her in appearance and shape and outline. They also would bear a greater resemblance to the sire, and therefore to each other, in colour, with the exception of grey, about which colour the following peculiarity calls for mention. In other colours a foal will sometimes be produced which resembles neither of its parents in colour, but

goes back to one of the grandfathers or grandmothers, but this is not the case with grey.

A grey foal is rarely, if ever, bred from two parents who are neither of them grey themselves, even though one of the parents may come from a grey stock. That is, if the colour is once lost in a family it will not come back again.

For instance, if a chestnut mare be put to a brown or black horse she may have a brown filly foal, and this foal might be put to a grey horse or a bay horse and a chestnut foal might be the result. But if a grey mare has a foal that is not grey, that foal will not produce a grey foal unless put to a grey.

There are four instances given of exceptions to this rule in the Stud Book, but it is quite possible that the information about them is not correct. It would, perhaps, be correct as to the colour of the animal itself, but might very possibly be mistaken as to the colour of one of its parents.

The size of the foal depends more on the size of the dam than the sire. If a mare is small herself, and breeds small stock generally, she will breed small to any horse, even if it is a large one that she is put to. But if she is a large roomy mare, she may, if the blood suits her, breed a large foal to a small horse, even though she may, as a rule, have previously bred small stock.

We therefore arrive at this conclusion, that in order to secure full-sized animals it is more neces-

sary to have a large, roomy mare than a large horse, while, on the other hand, in order to be more certain of obtaining a particular shape or outline, it is more important that the *sire* should be of the shape which you wish to obtain than the dam; or, to put it shorter, you ought to breed from mares which are the *size* you want, and horses which are the shape and colour you want.

Now it costs practically no more to keep a large good mare than a small one, and the only difference is in the expense of first buying them.

Again, it is very much easier to find a well-shaped symmetrical sire below the average standard than above it; and therefore there ought not to be so much difficulty in breeding in this manner.

On the contrary, it would appear to be a mistake to breed from little undersized mares because you cannot sell them, and then put them to oversized, ill-shaped sires to bring up the size, a practice which is often resorted to.

As a rule, disposition with regard to temper, tricks, and habits is derived more from the mother than the father, and therefore it is more important that the mare should be what is popularly called a good one than that the horse should.

As regards racing, a mare which has proved a good performer herself would be more likely to breed a good performer from any given horse than a mare

which had been tried and turned out an indifferent performer.

It often happens that a mare breeds successful racers who has not run much herself, but then it may very possibly be that she was herself a very good mare, but that from some accidental circumstance her capacities were not discovered, and then she would have an advantage even over a winner, because her goodness would be all there, and she would not have suffered any deterioration from the strain and exhaustion attendant on the hard work which is considered inseparable from training for racing.

A mare which has once bred a good runner is more likely to produce some more, even if put to a different horse, than a horse which has got a winner from one mare is likely to get a winner from another mare which could not race herself, and has not bred a winner before.

People who breed to race must breed to win, and are governed by other considerations than those which ought to influence a breeder of hunters. The shape best adapted to race is not that best adapted to hunting, and a good strain of running blood in a faulty-shaped sire is more valuable to a racing man than symmetry of form in another strain, whereas in hunting the strain of blood is of no consequence except as allied with a particular shape that is desired.

CHAPTER XXIV.

ON BREAKING AND TRAINING HORSES.

Many of the mares devoted to breeding hunters in this country are unsound and faulty animals, or else old hunters which have done work for several years, and which are in their old age before they begin to breed. The greater part of them probably having contracted some unsoundness or infirmity. This is probably the reason that so large a proportion of horses fail to stand sound.

There are two ways of avoiding this. First by selecting a young fresh mare and keeping her exclusively for the stud; the objection to this plan is that such a mare, if sound and big enough, is often too valuable for the owner to afford to lose the price she would fetch, being worth from 80*l.* to 120*l.* The second plan, which might I think be adopted with advantage to a much greater extent than it is, and which will be found to possess several advantages, is as follows.

Having bred or otherwise become possessed of

a good filly which promises to be big enough and strong enough to breed foals worth bringing up, she should be broken and made quiet to ride on a road, when two rising three, and should be taught to jump any description of fence without a rider on her back by being led or lunged over them with a long lead rein.

At three years old she should be sent to the best thoroughbred available, and then turned out, having corn every day. She will then have a foal when four years old, and if she breeds a filly, the same process can be repeated. By this means the foals will be obtained from fresh sound mares, and will inherit no defects that are produced from work. The foal will then be weaned in the October of the year when the mare is rising five, and she should then be gently ridden on the road till January, after which she may be shown the hounds, and having been taught to fence as a two-year-old, she will practically be a made hunter by the season when she is five rising six. By this means the cost of keeping a brood mare will be almost altogether saved. The mares bred from will be prevented from being hunted and spoilt, as many of them are, between three and five years old, before their muscles are set. It is probable also, that if required to breed from after some seasons' hunting, the fact of their having had a foal before will be in favour of their breeding well again after a lapse of years.

I have known several instances of this plan being adopted, in which I have afterwards ridden the mares hunting, and I never could trace any disadvantage arising from it.

The effect probably is to slightly enlarge the frame of the mare, and give it the appearance of having a larger middle than if she had not had a foal, and it is quite possible it may have the effect of partially developing the frame and giving increased play to the lungs and other internal organs.

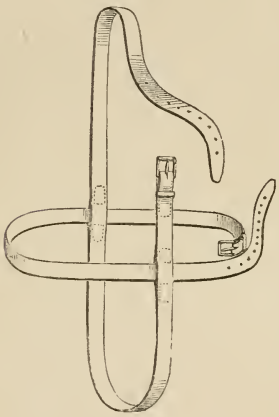
The foal should be allowed corn as soon as it will eat it, and in order to ensure its getting this, five posts should be let into the ground, and a rail fastened round the tops of them sufficiently high to allow the foal to run under, and at the same time to keep the mare out. The posts and rails should be arranged so as to form a circle, and a moveable manger should be placed in the centre; the corn should be put in this in small quantities at a time. One rail may be left open at first to allow the mare to go in and feed, as this will teach the foal, but as soon as the foal begins to eat the corn by itself, the rail should be put on again.

When the foal is weaned it should be shut up in a loose box by itself away from the mare, out of hearing if possible. The mare and foal should be taken into a box, and the mare then led out again, and the foal prevented from following her. As soon as the foal has got quiet it should be haltered and

taught to lead. This should be done in the following manner.

Ordinary hemp halters are not suitable for putting on to a foal or yearling for the first time; they are too rough and heavy. And if they are not tied under the jaw, and the foal pulls at them, they pinch his jaw and cause pain, and if they are tied in a knot it makes them clumsy and heavy. The following plan therefore should be proceeded with.

Fig. 29.



Get a couple of leather straps, three quarters of an inch broad and moderately thin, and long enough to reach round the foal's head either way, that is, one of them is to go over the back of the ears and down under the nose, and the other round the nose about half way between the eyes and nostrils. There should be two loops sewn on to the first strap to allow the second strap to pass through (fig. 29).

When you wish to put the headstall on the foal, you should have the strap that goes round the nose buckled, but larger than it will want to be when it is on. The strap that goes round the head lengthways should be unbuckled. The headstall should be held in the left hand by the two ends of the loose

strap, and a cart-whip in the right. The halter or headstall should be put on in a loose box, not too light: if you can see it is better for being slightly dark.

The way of putting on the halter is as follows. Hold the headstall by the two ends of the strap in the left hand, and the cart-whip in the right, with the butt-end towards the thumb and the lash on the same side as the little finger. This will keep the whip in the right position over the foal's hind-quarters and leave your finger and thumb at liberty to buckle the strap when you have got the headstall on. You should walk up to the foal with both arms extended, and the whip held towards his tail. The foal should be with his head to the manger, and you should walk very slowly up to him, about opposite his shoulder. The manger will prevent him moving forwards, and if he steps backwards you should touch his hind-quarters with the whip. If he is frightened, you should keep the whip still and not speak. If he is not frightened, and turns his head away from you or kicks, you should lash him smartly once or twice just above the hocks, and speak sharply to him at the same time. As soon as he turns his head to you, stand perfectly still. When he is standing against the wall with his head towards the manger, stand close to his shoulder and pass the left hand gently under his neck near his head; then without letting go of the whip, pass your right

hand over his mane, still keeping hold of the whip, and take hold of the tongue of the longer strap, holding the buckle-end in the left hand; then move your hands forward, till the lower part of the headstall is under his nose, gradually raise it till the nose passes through the shorter or buckled strap, and then fasten the tongue and buckle you are holding in your hands.

As soon as the headstall is fastened on, tighten the strap under the jaw; then pass a thin rope (a plough line will answer the purpose) through the strap that goes round the foal's nose, and let his head at liberty. The line should be long enough for you to hold one end, and let the foal go to the farther side of the box; then touch him gently with the whip over the quarters, and pull his head towards you. Horses can pull hard backwards or forwards, but not sideways, so that by this means you can get him to walk round the box without much trouble.

As soon as he will walk round the box he may be led about in a small yard, and then along the road; on the road a common headstall or leather halter should be put on him. As soon as he will be led with a halter, he should have a bridle put on in the same manner as the head-collar; that is, by unbuckling one side of the bridle and passing it round his neck. Any snaffle-bit will do, but a chain-snaffle, that is, a large curb-chain with a cheek-bar at each end, will do as well as anything.

The foal, if intended for hunting, should be taught to jump as a two-year-old without anyone on his back. By adopting this plan there is much less danger of their getting lamed, and if they do, it is not of so much consequence. In order to teach them to jump, proceed as follows. Put on a plain snaffle or chain-snaffle, and fasten a thin cord to each end of the bit. Two men should then lead the colt, one having hold of the cord on each side, and a third should follow it with a cart-whip. It should first be practised over a small jump, the smaller the better, anything that will make it lift its feet from the ground will do; two or three sheep-troughs placed in a row, first singly, and then one on the top of another, upside down. It should then be taken over some small ditches in the following manner. The man with the whip should lead the colt, and the other two should walk a little in front and a little on each side of him, holding the two cords. The two first should get over the ditch, and then stand nearly at the length of the cord, and eight or ten yards apart. The man with the whip should then lead the colt up to the edge of the ditch, and then let go of him and stand behind him. If he does not jump it after he has looked at it a bit, and the man should touch him lightly with the whip, it will be seen that the colt cannot go anywhere but straight forwards. If he tries to go on either side, the man on the other side will stop him, and the man with the

whip will prevent his running backwards. As soon as he jumps the ditch, one of the men (having settled beforehand which) should let his rope go, and the horse will then run round the other man as if he was getting lunged. He should then be led on to the next fence and the same process repeated.

The manner in which horses are taught to jump to begin with, is of as much importance as anything. By adopting the foregoing method there is hardly any risk of an accident, and the colt soon acquires confidence. After a few trials they will jump a flight of hurdles as they are lunged round, if the hurdles are in their track. The advantage of having no rider on their backs is very great, and a horse that has been well-taught at two years old in this manner, will want hardly any teaching whatever when it is five years old, and may be ridden in a run without any difficulty when it is old enough, and will go nearly as well as a made hunter.

Many of the lamenesses of horses are caused by their straining themselves in refusing and turning sharply round, or exerting themselves violently with a weight on their backs.

After a colt has been taught to jump should come what is commonly called breaking in, which in the manner in which it is sometimes done I should describe as a combination of teaching him to carry a man on his back and teaching him a good many things he would be much better without.

And here again, as I pointed out in teaching a horse to leap when ridden, the evil arises from people trying to teach the colt more than one thing at once.

Now teaching a horse to carry a rider along a road involves several things, and each of these things should be taught him as far as is possible separately from the others.

Thus one of the things is to get him to allow a man to put a saddle on his back and get up and sit on it, without the colt either being frightened or trying to throw the rider, and this has no reference whatever to the horse being taught to go along a road, and could and ought to be taught entirely in a loose box, or after that in a barn or small yard with high walls round it.

Similarly, teaching a horse to go straight along a road without stopping to look at things, or shying, or trying to run away, although it is a necessary part of breaking, has no connection necessarily with having either a saddle or a man on him, and would be much better taught separately.

Perhaps I shall be best understood if I say that a horse ought to have learnt to go perfectly quietly along a road, and to pass objects without being frightened, *without* a man on his back, before he is allowed to go on the road *with* a man on his back; and conversely, that he should have become thoroughly used to having a saddle on, and a man mounting and dismounting and sitting on his back,

in a large box or walled yard, before the man rides him anywhere else.

If this plan were followed, we should not see, as we often do see, a young horse equally frightened of the things he meets and the rider on his back, and spending part of his time in shying first at one thing and then at another, and part in trying to dislodge what he no doubt considers an unwelcome and unnecessary burden.

It should be borne in mind that all you have to teach an unbroken horse is, to know what you want him to do and to be willing to do it, and this entirely affects the mind of the horse and not his body.

Hence I should not pay much attention to what is said about making a horse's mouth, giving him a mouth, setting him on his legs, &c.

For the same reason I think that the large complicated bits usually put in a young horse's mouth are unnecessary and perhaps injurious.

If a horse is ridden about in a loose box or yard where he cannot run away, and taught to thoroughly understand that when you pull at his bridle you want him to stop, he will go on as well with a small bit in his mouth as a large one.

The chief thing a young horse requires when first mounted is, *first*, that he should not be able to unseat his rider, and for this reason a leather roll is strapped on in front of the saddle.

The next thing he requires is that he should not

be able to put his head anywhere he likes, that is, either very much up or very much down.

The simplest way of preventing this is by fastening his head by means of straps in the position you want him to carry it, or as nearly so as you can without distressing him.

If an ordinary hunting saddle and breastplate is put on him, his head can be secured by fastening a strap from his head to the large ring of the breastplate. This will prevent him from putting his head *up*, and two more straps from his head to the small rings of the breastplate will prevent him from putting his head down.

The question then arises how are the other ends of the straps to be fastened to the horse's head, and here I differ entirely from the usual practice.

The usual practice is to fasten the horse's head by means of his jaw or mouth, and as you want to teach him to obey the lightest touch of your hand, it is about the worst way you could go to work to do it.

The colt should either have a head collar on with a noseband, or have a noseband attached to his bridle. The strap to keep his head down should be attached to this underneath his jaw, and the straps which are fastened to the upper rings of the breastplate should pass through the rings of the bit and then be attached to the front of the noseband.

By this means the horse's head will be held in

the right position by means of the pressure of soft leather straps on his nose, instead of by a sharp bit in his mouth, and his mouth will be left perfectly free to receive impressions from the rider's hands.

Thus much for mounting the horse.

He can be taught to go on the road quietly by leading him, first with a man on foot, and then alongside of another horse, and when he is quite quiet to lead along a road and ride in an enclosed yard, he will not take much teaching to *ride* along a road. I have never tried the experiment or heard of its being tried, but I think it extremely probable that if an unbroken colt were taken up at the time that hunters are taken up, in August, and exercised regularly by being led alongside of another horse, first with only a surcingle on, then with a saddle, and then with someone on his back, but *still* being led as well, having been mounted and dismounted occasionally in the meantime in the loose box, I think if this plan were adopted, that by the time the hunters were in condition the young horse would be found to be fit to ride.

I need not say that these remarks apply chiefly to horses that have no particular tendency to vice or sulkiness, and that are not exceptionally timid or nervous. In such cases as these the teaching must be suited to the disposition of the horse, and no general rule can be given; but even here, the plan I

have recommended will be found to be a good groundwork to go upon.

Most people, in fact I might almost say all people, are in the habit of riding with a whip, and therefore it is necessary to teach the horse to carry one quietly, but I believe that in many cases a horse would go better and more pleasantly without one.

If the rider strikes the horse with it, nine times out of ten he is probably in the wrong to do so, and if he does not strike him himself, the horse is sure to have been ridden by someone at some time who has struck him, and is always more or less on the look out for it when the rider moves his whip about, and if he is at all a nervous frightened horse, he is sure to be more so with a whip than without one.

CHAPTER XXV.

BETTING.

There is one subject which is not strictly or of necessity connected with horses or riding directly, but is indirectly so much mixed up with it, and exercises such an influence on it, that a work such as this is hardly complete without a chapter being devoted to it, and that is the practice of betting.

All the better breeds of horses are now influenced by the class of thoroughbreds we breed, and these are a good deal influenced by the class of racing in vogue; and racing owes a great deal of its existence, and the dimensions it has attained, to the practice of wagering.

In treating of betting I do not propose to inculcate any particular view or opinion, but rather to try and help to arrange the views and ideas which are held, and which I cannot help thinking are at present slightly, if not considerably, in confusion.

I will in the first place point out that there appears to exist a remarkable similarity, or rather

analogy, between the practice of betting on the one hand, and the consumption of drink on the other.

Both are considered by different classes of people respectively as a business, an amusement, and a vice.

Both of them are admissible by law, but both are surrounded by enactments which are certainly restrictive, and often harassing, and sometimes unfair between one set of people and another, and the enactments imposed upon both, at one time or another, have been made a good deal at the suggestion, and by the influence, of that section of the public who are avowed enemies to them altogether, and wish to see them abolished and prohibited by law, thus giving the legislation the character of a compromise, and making it, like many compromises, difficult either to explain or justify by any rules of sound logic or common sense.

Now to begin with the similarity in definition. Both wagering and the consumption of wines, spirits, &c., may be considered either as a business, a pleasure, or a vice, according to the people engaged in it.

To the professional book-maker and the licensed victualler it is a business pure and simple, and a book-maker who confines himself strictly to making his book in a business-like manner, can no more be called a gambler than a licensed victualler can be called a drunkard.

It would be difficult to convince the public in general that anyone who wagers an amount which it is no inconvenience to him to pay, or that anyone who drinks a small quantity of wine which is insufficient to affect him injuriously, is doing anything more than indulging in a pleasure.

While most people would agree that anyone who habitually drinks more than he ought to take, or wagers a greater sum than he ought to be able to spare if he lost, is guilty of a vice differing only in magnitude according to the extent to which it is indulged in.

Thus all the people holding the three different views I have mentioned are right, but they are right only in particular instances, and it is by applying their rule indiscriminately to all people and at all times, that their views become unfair and do not meet with the general recognition they wish.

Next as to the analogy between the legislation, or the laws which have been passed, regarding betting on the one hand, and the consumption of drink on the other.

Both are legal, but the laws affecting them are framed as if they were to a certain extent illegal. It is legal to sell drink only at certain times, and it is legal to make bets only under certain conditions. It is legal to sell drink in a place licensed for the purpose, and nowhere else, while we might almost say it is legal to make a bet anywhere *except* in a place appointed for the purpose.

The result of this sort of legislation is to make it in effect more difficult for people of a lower class to indulge in either making bets, or consuming drink, than those of a higher, as the richer and higher classes find it more easy to comply with the vexatious and intricate regulations than the poorer and less educated, and therefore are less liable to come into collision with the law.

But enactments of this one-sided description do harm, and it does not speak well for our social institutions that there should be in the same street a club, which is really nothing more than a co-operative hotel, where the rich can buy wine at any hour of the night and throughout the whole day on Sunday, and side by side with it a house into which the poorer citizen is debarred by Act of Parliament from entering, except at stated hours. While it is a blot on our domestic legislation to see in one column of a newspaper the current odds at Tattersall's quoted, with the amount of betting transactions recorded, and in another column of the same newspaper to read of the police having made a forcible entry into a house, and having summoned the inmates before the magistrates, and of their being fined a large sum with the option of going to prison, for being engaged in transactions of a precisely similar nature.

I will now proceed to consider the effect produced by the practice of wagering on the character

of our turf and our racehorses. It will not I think be disputed that betting has a tendency to very largely increase the number of our race meetings, and in consequence the number of our racehorses.

This, in a country where the supply of horses is of value, is a benefit, and it is about the only benefit conferred, in my opinion, on the country by betting. It does not in any way conduce to producing finer or better specimens, except indirectly by causing a larger number to be bred, and there being consequently a greater quantity to pick from. But except in that manner, it has a tendency to deteriorate the breed of animals by causing many inferior animals to be bred from which would otherwise have been discarded.

The system of handicapping or placing different weights on horses competing in the same race is inseparable from betting, because otherwise there would not be sufficient uncertainty attending the results to enable bookmakers to offer bets to the extent which they now do.

Now in a handicap it is by no means the best horse which is likely to win, but the horse whose merit the handicapper or person who adjusts the weights is least acquainted with, and therefore in order to win a great race of this sort, it is not so necessary to have a thorough good horse, as to keep other people in ignorance of how good the horse is that you purpose running.

The result of this is that many horses are trained

at great expense which would be discarded as worthless or nearly so if there were no handicaps and no betting, and these animals are afterwards bred from, and perpetuate stock of a similar class.

Many of the horses now running consume every year food to twice the amount of their own value, and the whole of this food and the labour in attending to them may be said to be utterly wasted as far as the community at large is concerned.

Whether the great increase in the number of horses bred in consequence of betting and handicaps produces a sufficient increase of superior animals to compensate for the waste, it is difficult to decide, but whether or not it is the cause of many good horses being bred, there is no doubt it is the cause of a great many bad ones being bred.

Anyone who made up their minds to breed their own horses and run them in weight for age races only, would, I should think, have more good horses to show at the end of a term of years than anyone who raced in the ordinary manner.

And anyone who confined their speculations strictly to the stakes for which their horses ran would, in my opinion, have more *money* to show at the end of any given time than the man who tried to increase the amount of his winnings on each race by backing his horse in addition to entering him.

Spottiswoode & Co., Printers, New-street Square, London.